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ÆSOP's FABLES.

With Inſtructive

Morals *and* Reflections,

Abſtracted from all

PARTY CONSIDERATIONS,

ADAPTED

To All CAPACITIES;

And deſigned to promote

RELIGION MORALITY,

AND

UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE.

Containing Two Hundred and Forty FABLES, with a CUT Engrav'd on Copper to each Fable.

And the LIFE of *ÆSOP* prefixed,

BY Mr RICHARDSON.



Printed for T. Wilson, and R. Spence,
Booksellers in York.

A 254 F 8

PREFACE.

WHEN there are so many editions of Æsop's Fables, it will be expected that some reasons should be given for the appearance of a new; and we shall be as brief on this head as the nature of the thing will admit. Of all the English editions, we shall consider only two as worthy of notice; to wit, That of the celebrated Sir Roger L'Estrange, and that which appears under the Name of S. Croxall, subscribed to the dedication. And when we have given an account of what each says for his own performance, it will be our turn to offer some things to the reader with regard to our present undertaking.

"When first I put pen to paper upon this de-" sign," says Sir Roger, "I had in my eye only " the common school book, as it stands in the " Cambridge and Oxford editions of it, under the " title of *Æsopi Phrygis Fabulæ*; *una cum nonnullis* " *variorum Auctorum Fabulis adjectis*: Propound-" ing to myself at that time to follow the very " course and series of that collection; and in one " word to try what might be done by making the " best of the whole, and adapting proper and use-" ful doctrines to the several parts of it, toward the " turning of an *excellent* Latin manual of morals " and good counsels into a *tolerable* English one. " But upon jumbling matters and thoughts toge-" ther, and laying one thing by another, the very " state and condition of the case before me, toge-" ther with the nature and the reason of the thing, " gave me to understand, that this way of pro-" ceeding would never answer my end: Insomuch " that, upon this consideration, I consulted other

" verſions of the ſame Fables, and made my beſt " of the choice. Some that were twice or thrice " over, and only the ſelf-ſame thing in other " words; theſe I ſtruck out, and made one ſpeci- " men ſerve for the reſt. To ſay nothing of here " and there a *trivial*, or a *looſe* conceit in the med- " ley, more than *this*, that, ſuch as they are, I " was under ſome ſort of obligation to take them " in for company; and, in ſhort, *good*, *bad*, and " *indifferent*, one with another, to the number, in " the total, of 383 fables. To theſe I have like- " wiſe ſubjoined a conſiderable addition of other " ſelect *apologues*, out of the moſt celebrated au- " thors that are extant upon that ſubject, towards " finiſhing of the work."

And a little farther, " This rhapſody of fables," ſays he, " is a book univerſally read, and taught " in all our ſchools; but almoſt at ſuch a rate as " we teach *pyes* and *parrots*, that pronounce the " words without ſo much as gueſſing at the mean- " ing of them: or, to take it another way, the boys " break their teeth upon the ſhells, without ever " coming near the kernel. They learn fables by " leſſons, and the moral is the leaſt part of our care " in a child's inſtitution: So that take them both " together, and the one is ſtark nonſenſe, without " the application of the other; beſide that, the " doctrine itſelf, as we have it, even at the beſt, " falls infinitely ſhort of the vigour and ſpirit of the " fable. To ſupply this defect now, we have had " ſeveral Engliſh paraphraſes and eſſays upon Æſop, " and divers of his followers, both in proſe and " verſe. The latter have perchance ventured a " little too far from the preciſe ſcope of the author, " upon the privilege of a poetical licence: And for " the other of antient date, the morals are ſo inſi- " pid and flat, and the ſtyle and diction of the fa- " bles ſo coarſe and uncouth, that they are rather

" dangerous

" dangerous than profitable, as to the purpose they " were principally intended for; and likely to do " forty times more mischief by the one than good " by the other. An emblem without a key to it, " is no more than a tale of a tub; and that tale, " fillily told too, is but one folly grafted upon " another. Children are to be taught, in the first " place, what they ought to do: 2dly, The man- " ner of doing it: And, in the third place, they " are to be inured, by the force of instruction and " good example, to the love and practice of doing " their duty; whereas, on the contrary, one step " out of the way, in the institution, is enough to " poison the peace and the reputation of a whole " life.—Whether I have in this attempt," adds Sir Roger, " contributed, or not, to the improve- " ment of these fables, either in the wording or " the meaning of them, the book must stand or " fall to itself: But this I shall adventure to pro- " nounce upon the whole matter, that the text is " English, and the morals in some sort accommo- " dated to the allegory; which could hardly be " said of all the translations or reflections before- " mentioned, which have served, in truth (or at " least some of them) rather to teach us what we " should *not* do, than what we *should*. So that in " the publishing of these papers, I have done my " best to obviate a common inconvenience, or, to " speak plainly, the mortal error of pretending to " erect a building upon a false foundation; leaving " the whole world to take the same freedom with " me that I have done with others."

Thus far Sir Roger L'Estrange. Now we come to what the other gentleman has to say *for* himself, or rather, as he hath managed the matter, what he has to say *against* Sir Roger, the depreciating of whose work, seems to be the corner-stone of his own building.

" Nothing of this nature," says he, " has been " done since L'Estrange's time worth mentioning; " and we had nothing before, but what (as he ob- " serves, Preface to part i.) was so *insipid and flat* " *in the moral, and so coarse and uncouth in the style* " *and diction, that they were rather dangerous than* " *profitable, as to the purpose for which they were* " *intended; and likely to do forty times more harm* " *than good.* I shall therefore only observe to " my reader the insufficiency of L'Estrange's own " performance, as to the purpose for which he " professes to have principally intended it; with " some other circumstances which will help to ex- " cuse, if not justify, what I have enterprised upon " the same subject.

" Now the purpose for which he principally in- " tended his book, as in his preface he spends a " great many words to inform us, was for the use " and instruction of children, who being, as it were, " a mere *rasa tabula*, or blank paper, *are ready* " *indifferently for any opinions, good or bad, taking* " *all upon credit and that it is in the power of the* " *first comer to write saint or devil upon them, which* " *he pleases.* This being truly and certainly the " case, what devils, nay, what poor devils, would " L'Estrange make of those children, who should " be so unfortunate as to read his book, and im- " bibe his pernicious principles! principles coined " and suited to promote the growth, and serve the " ends of popery and arbitrary power. Tho' we " had never been told he was a pensioner to a po- " pish prince, and that he himself * professed the " same

* Is the gentleman sure of what he thus positively asserts? What shall we think of so round an assertor, if he be wrong? Sir Roger himself deny'd that he was a papist, in a pamphlet expressly written to clear himself from such an aspersion thrown upon him by a like charitable writer, which he intitled, *L'Estrange no Papist.* Not any of his works, high- flier

" ſame unaccountable religion, yet his reflections " upon Æſop would diſcover it to us: In every " political touch he ſhews himſelf to be the tool " and hireling of the popiſh faction; ſince even a " ſlave, without ſome mercenary view, would not " bring arguments to juſtify ſlavery, nor endeavour " to eſtabliſh arbitrary power upon the baſis of " right reaſon. What ſort of children therefore " are the *blank paper*, upon which ſuch morality " as this ought to be written? Not the children " of Britain, I hope; for they are born with free " blood in their veins, and ſuck in liberty with " their very milk. This they ſhould be taught to " love and cheriſh above all things, and, upon oc- " caſion, to defend and vindicate it; as it is the " glory of their country, the greateſt bleſſing of " their lives, and the peculiar happy privilege, in " which they excel all the world beſides. Let " therefore L'Eſtrange, with his ſlaviſh doctrine, " be baniſhed to the barren deſerts of Arabia, to " the nurſeries of Turky, Perſia, and Morocco, " where all footſteps of liberty have long ſince been " worn out, and the minds of the people, by a " narrow way of thinking, contracted and inured " to fear, poverty, and miſerable ſervitude. Let " the children of Italy, France, Spain, and the " reſt of the popiſh countries, furniſh him with " blank paper for principles, of which free-born " Britons are not capable. The earlier ſuch no- " tions are inſtilled into ſuch minds as theirs in- " deed, the better it will be for them, as it will " keep them from thinking of any other than the " abject ſervile condition to which they are born. " But let the minds of our Britiſh youth be for

flier as he was, ſhew him to be a papiſt; and whoever reads, in his Æſop, ſome of his fables, and the reflections upon them, will judge, that they could not come ſo *voluntarily* from a *profeſſed* papiſt and bigot. See in Vol. I. Fab. 276, 296, 298, 356, 357, 362, 364, 366, 436. And in Vol. II. Fab. 42, 105, 170, 264, 273.

" ever educated and improved in that ſpirit of " truth and liberty, for the ſupport of which their " anceſtors have often bravely exhauſted ſo much " blood and treaſure."

Thus we ſee the chief quarrel of the worthy gentleman is againſt the politics of Sir Roger; and we heartily join with him on this head. Sir Roger was certainly liſted in a bad cauſe as to politics, and his reflections have many of them a pernicious tendency. But were the times in which he wrote conſidered, the civil wars ſo lately concluded in his view, and the anarchy introduced by them, it is the leſs wonder that one extreme produced another in the oppoſite party in its turn. Many very great men of that age fell into the ſame error with Sir Roger; and perhaps a charitable mind, duly reflecting upon this, and not intent upon partial or ſelfiſh views, would have found ſomething to have ſaid, if not in *excuſe*, yet in *extenuation* of the fault.

The gentleman further obſerves, " That L'E- " ſtrange made not fair reflections upon the fables " in political points: That Æſop, though a ſlave, " was a lover of liberty, and gives not one hint to " favour L'Eſtrange's inſinuations: But that, on " the contrary, he takes all occaſions to recom- " mend a love for liberty, and an abhorrence of " tyranny, and all arbitrary proceedings: That " L'Eſtrange notoriouſly perverts both the ſenſe " and meaning of ſeveral fables, particularly when " any political inſtruction is couched in the appli- " cation;" and then gives an example in Sir Roger's fable of the *Dog and the Wolf*; and further objects againſt the knight, " that he has ſwelled " his work, which was deſigned for the uſe of * " children

* The gentleman little conſiders here, how liable he himſelf is to objection for his pedantic quotations and Latin ſcraps, ſo frequently ſcattered through his own applications, in a piece deſigned for the earlieſt part of childrens education.

" children, to a voluminous bulk; and by that " means raiſed to an exorbitant price, ſo as to " make it unſuitable to the hand or pocket of " the generality of children." And here follows a very extraordinary concluſion, which we ſhall give *verbatim:* " If I," ſays the gentleman, " were to put conſtructions upon the ways of Pro- " vidence, I ſhould fancy this prolixity of his was " ordered as a preſervative againſt his noxious " principles; for, however his book may have " been uſed by *men*, I dare ſay few *children* have " been converſant with it." So that we ſee, at laſt, all the terrible apprehenſions of the miſchiefs of Sir Roger's book are merely the effect of the good gentleman's imagination, which, it is generally ſaid, has run away with his judgment in more inſtances than the preſent.

If this then be the caſe, we preſume to hope, that, even in the opinion of this buſy but ſevere cenſurer, there will not be any neceſſity to baniſh poor L'Eſtrange to the barren deſerts of Arabia, to the nurſeries of Turky, Perſia, Morocco; nor that he ſhould be confined to the children of Italy, France, Spain, and the reſt of the popiſh countries; but, for the ſake of the excellent ſenſe contained in his other reflections, where politics are not concerned; for the ſake of the benefit which the * Engliſh tongue has received from his maſterly hand; for the ſake of that fine humour, appoſite

* We know what a certain tranſlator has ſaid againſt Sir Roger's ſtyle, *&c.* But tho' we could prove that there is much partiality and injuſtice in his charge, yet we ſhall content ourſelves to ſay with Winſtanley, in his lives of the moſt famous Engliſh poets, printed *An.* 1685. p. 219. " That thoſe who " ſhall conſider the number and greatneſs of his books, " would admire that he ſhould ever write ſo many; and " thoſe who have read them, conſidering the ſtyle and me- " thod they are written in, will more admire he ſhould " write ſo well."

poſite language, accurate and lively manner, which will always render Sir Roger delightful, and which this ſevere critic has in ſome places ſo wretchedly endeavoured to imitate: For all theſe ſakes, I ſay, let him remain among us ſtill, ſince our author thinks he can do no harm to children, and men may be ſuppoſed guarded by years and experience; and the rather, as it will ſhew the difference between a fine original and a poor imitation; and that no prating jay may ſtrut about in the beautiful plumage of the peacock.

The gentleman proceeds, and fixes a ſtigma on the ſecond volume of Sir Roger's fables; and, in the main, we join with him in it; for, as a book of fables, it is truly unworthy of that celebrated hand; and for that reaſon we have made very little uſe of it in our preſent edition; though we cannot but apprehend, that he was put upon it rather by the importunity of bookſellers, encouraged by the ſucceſs of the firſt volume, than by his own choice or judgment: And, after all, ſome allowance ought to be made for his circumſtances, and his years, being, as he tells us, on the wrong ſide of fourſcore when he wrote it.

It is but juſt to tranſcribe the concluding paragraph of Mr. Croxall's preface.

"Whether," ſays he, "I have mended the faults "I find with him, in this, or any other reſpect, "I muſt leave to the judgment of the reader; "profeſſing (according to the principle on which "the following applications are built) that I am "a lover of liberty and truth, an enemy to ty- "ranny, either in church or ſtate; and one who "deteſts party-animoſities, and factious diviſions, "as much as I wiſh the peace and proſperity of "my country."

We greatly applaud this pompous declaration of the good gentleman's principles: But though we might

might obſerve, that he has ſtrained the natural import of ſome of the fables, near as much one way as Sir Roger has done the other, and may be cenſured for giving too frequently into political reflections, which had, on all occaſions, if the book be meant for children, better be avoided, where the moral will bear a more general and inoffenſive turn; yet we ſhall only ſay, that had this gentleman, who cloaths himſelf in the ſkin of the departed knight, and at firſt ſight makes ſo formidable an appearance in it, lived in the days of Sir Roger, and had Sir Roger lived in his, it is not impoſſible that the ſentiments of both might have changed.

We will explain ourſelves: The reſtoration of monarchy under King Charles II. made theſe now exploded doctrines as much the faſhion then, as the glorious revolution under King William III. has made Mr. Croxall's principles the faſhion now. And for aught that appears from the moderation of the gentleman, if we may judge of it by ſeveral paſſages in his preface, had this gentleman lived when Sir Roger did, he might have been the L'Eſtrange of the *one court*, as L'Eſtrange, had he been in his place, might have taken orders, and become chaplain in the *other*. If the living gentleman reflects, as he ought, upon the little mercy he has ſhewn to the dead, he will not think this too ſevere. And the compariſon will appear the leſs invidious to any one who conſiders, that Sir Roger ſuffered for his principles, bad as they were; and the other, we hope, for the ſake of the public, as well as for his own ſake, will never be called upon to ſuch trials.

We have thus ſet the pretenſions of the two gentlemen in a proper light; it remains for us now to ſay ſomething of our undertaking.

The uſefulneſs and benefit of ſuch a work to children is allowed on all hands; and therefore we ſhall

ſhall not inſiſt upon a topic which has been ſo much laboured by thoſe who have gone before us.

We have ſeen, that the only objections which a ſcrutinizing adverſary, who had it in view to ſupplant the knight, and thruſt himſelf into his place, can find againſt him, are the political part, and the bulk and price of the performance: As to the reſt, on comparing the works, we find a very great diſparity between them: We therefore were aſſured, that we ſhould do an acceptable ſervice, if we could give the *exceptionable* reflections a more general and *uſeful* turn; and if we could reduce the work to ſuch a ſize as ſhould be fit for the hands and pockets for which it was principally deſigned, and at the ſame time preſerve to Sir Roger the principal graces and beauties for which he is ſo juſtly admired. And this only, though we found afterwards a neceſſity of going further, was our *firſt* intention.

We were the rather prevailed upon to take this liberty with Sir Roger, becauſe he ingenuouſly declares, in what we have quoted from his preface, "That he was under ſome ſort of obligation to "take into his medley," as he modeſtly calls it, "here and there a trivial or a looſe conceit for "company." An obligation impoſed upon him, we preſume, by his unhappy circumſtances, (and which hardly thoſe could excuſe) in order to add to the bulk of his book, which he firſt publiſhed in folio.

This, with other proper alterations, where the ſenſe and poignance of the fable and reflections would beſt bear it, we thought would give us the opportunity of anſwering the o jection about the bulk and price. And, on looking cloſer into the ſubject, we found ſufficient reaſon to juſtify our opinion.

Thus

Thus then, inſtead of baniſhing Sir Roger to the deſerts of Arabia, we confeſs it was our intention every-where, except in his *political reflections*, to keep that celebrated writer cloſe in our eye: And in ſome places we have accordingly contented ourſelves with the inferior honour of having only abridged him, where we could not with equal beauty and propriety give words and ſentences different from his own; rather chuſing to acknowledge our obligations to ſo great a maſter, than to arrogate to ourſelves the praiſes due to another.

We have not, however, ſpared any of thoſe *conceits*, as Sir Roger calls them, which we imagine capable only of a *trivial*, or liable to a *looſe* conſtruction. We have alſo preſumed to alter ſeveral of the fables which we thought capable of better-adapted and more forcible morals than Sir Roger had given them: And inſtead of the political reflections, we have generally ſubſtituted ſuch as we hope will be found more general and inſtructive. For we think it in no wiſe excuſable to inflame childrens minds with diſtinctions, which they will imbibe faſt enough from the attachments of parents, and the warmth of their own imaginations. But nevertheleſs we muſt add, that wherever the fable *compelled*, as we may ſay, a political turn, we have, in our reflections upon it, always given that preference to the principles of LIBERTY, which, we hope, will for ever be the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of a Briton.

As we are ſenſible of the alluring force which cuts or pictures, ſuited to the reſpective ſubjects, have on the minds of children, we have, in a quite new manner, engraved on copper-plates, at no ſmall expence, the ſubject of every fable; and preſume, that the little trouble which children will have to turn to the cuts, as ten of them are included

included in one plate, will rather excite their curiosity, and stimulate their attention, than puzzle or confound them, especially as the readers are distinctly referred both to page and fable in every representation.

What we have said may be thought sufficient to justify us with regard to the equity of our design: But that we may entirely clear ourselves on this head, we will subjoin the four following lists, which will set the matter in a clear light; and likewise convince every one concerned in the business of education, how careful we have been to collect only such fables as were fit for the instruction of the youth of both sexes, at the same time that we hope it will not be found unworthy of the perusal of persons of riper years and understanding.

I. A LIST of such FABLES of Sir Roger L'Estrange which we have omitted, as being either of the like nature, and affording the like morals and reflections with others inserted; or from which such pertinent morals could not be drawn, as we were desirous to select for general use.

Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.
37	57	89	112	139	175	198	213
41	60	92	114	152	178	199	216
47	65	93	115	153	181	203	222
48	70	95	117	158	182	205	231
49	71	103	120	159	183	210	232
51	78	107	135	171	184	211	233
53	80	111	138	173	185	212	247
55	81						

II. A LIST of such FABLES of Sir Roger's as we have omitted, as being rather to be deemed witty conceits, facetious tales, and sometimes ludicrous stories, than instructive apologues.

Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.
183	273	303	337	370	405	436	465
184	275	304	338	371	406	437	466
185	276	305	339	372	407	438	467
232	278	306	340	373	408	439	468
242	279	307	341	374	409	440	469
244	280	308	342	375	410	441	470
245	281	309	343	376	411	442	471
247	282	311	344	377	412	443	472
249	283	312	348	378	413	444	473
250	284	313	349	379	414	446	474
251	285	315	351	380	415	447	475
252	286	316	354	381	416	448	476
253	287	318	355	384	417	451	481
255	288	321	356	385	418	452	482
256	289	322	357	386	419	453	483
259	291	323	359	387	420	454	485
260	292	325	360	389	421	455	486
261	293	326	361	391	423	456	489
263	294	328	362	392	424	457	490
264	295	329	363	394	425	458	493
265	296	330	364	395	426	459	494
266	297	331	365	396	427	460	496
268	298	332	366	397	428	461	497
269	299	334	367	399	429	462	498
270	301	335	368	401	432	463	499
271	302	336	369	402	434	464	500

III. A LIST of such FABLES to which we have presumed to give entirely either new morals or new reflections, as we thought the design of the fables more naturally required, in order to direct them to general use; or to avoid party or political reflections.

Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.
77	104	123	142	162	177	193	272
81	105	125	144	164	178	194	274
82	106	126	145	165	179	195	277
87	109	127	147	166	180	198	300
89	110	128	148	167	181	199	310
90	111	132	149	168	182	200	314
92	112	133	150	169	183	202	327
94	114	134	151	170	184	204	333
97	117	135	153	171	185	207	368
99	118	136	157	173	186	208	430
101	119	137	158	174	187	209	449
102	122	139	159	176	188	262	491
103							

IV. A LIST of ſuch FABLES of Sir Roger's, as we have taken the liberty to alter, or enforce, that we might accommodate them to more uſeful morals and reflections:

Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.
2	121	150	165	177	189	206	333
66	123	151	166	178	193	208	388
71	124	153	171	180	196	209	435
105	136	157	174	181	203	319	495
114	148						

The following fables, as they ſtand in this work, are all that we are beholden for to the ſecond volume of Sir Roger; and we have not only taken great liberty with them, but have fitted ſuch morals and reflections to them, as we hope will be found equally agreeable and inſtructive. Theſe are,

234. TRAVELLER AND GRASSHOPPERS.
236. PARTRIDGES AND SETTING-DOG.
237. LAME MAN AND BLIND.
238. THE THREE PRETENDED PENITENTS.
239. DISAPPOINTED MILK-MAID.

And FAB. 240. NO TO-MORROW (which ſtands FAB. 495. in Sir Roger's firſt volume), we have turned from a moſt ludicrous one, to a very edifying fable, as we preſume will be found on compariſon; and therefore we have choſen to conclude our work with it.

THE

THE

LIFE OF ÆSOP.

WE have had the history of Æsop so many times over and over, as Sir Roger L'Estrange observes, and dressed up so many several ways, that it would be but labour lost to multiply unprofitable conjectures upon a tradition of so great uncertainty. Writers are divided about him, almost to all manner of purposes, and particularly concerning the authority even of the greater part of those compositions that pass to the world in his name: For the story is come down to us so dark and doubtful, that it is impossible to distinguish the original from the copy; and to say which of the fables are Æsop's, and which not; which are genuine, and which are spurious; beside, that there are divers inconsistencies upon the point of chronology, in the account of his life (as Maximus Planudes and others have delivered it) which can never be reconciled.

This is enough in all conscience to excuse any man, says Sir Roger, from laying over much stress upon the historical credit of a relation that comes so blindly and so variously transmitted to us; over and above, that it is not one jot to our business (further than to gratify an idle curiosity) whether the fact be true or false; whether the man was straight or crooked; and his name Æsop, or (as some will have it) Lochman: In all which cases, the reader is left at liberty to believe at pleasure. This uncertainty at first inclined us to avoid entering into the life of Æsop, which we find mingled with so many trifling circumstances, and subject to so great confusion: But our booksellers acquainting us, that something of this

kind would be very acceptable to the generality of readers. and that those editions had been most inquired after, which contained the life of this excellent person; in compliance with their request we will give a brief summary of it, as we find it collected by the celebrated Sir Roger L'Estrange, omitting however such parts of it as seem either trivial or improbable.

Æsop then (according to Planudes, Camerarius, and others) was by birth of Ammorius, a town in the Greater Phrygia (though some will have him to be a Thracian, others a Samian) of a mean condition, and his person deformed, to the highest degree: Flat-nosed, hunch-backed, blubber-lipped, a long mis-shapen head, his body crooked all over, big-bellied, badger-legged, and his complexion so swarthy, that he took his very name from it; for Æsop is the same with Æthiop. He was not only thus unhappy in his figure, but we are told, that he had besides such an impediment in his speech, that people could very hardly understand what he said. Whether this was so or not, or how he came to be cured of it, if it was, the reader is at liberty to believe what he pleases; and so likewise of twenty other passages up and down this history. Let it suffice, that (according to the common tradition) he had been already twice bought and sold; and so, with Sir Roger L'Estrange, we shall date the story of his adventures, from his entrance into the service of at least a third master.

As to the age he lived in, it is agreed upon among the ancients, that it was when Crœsus governed Lydia: And as his condition was the most abject slavery, no wonder that many of the things recorded of him were low and mean, and suited to the circumstance of life in which he was placed; but by which however he so signalized his wisdom, as to raise himself to that pitch of honour to which he afterwards arrived.

Among these the first we find recorded, is, That his master having many burdens to send by his slaves to Ephesus, and Æsop being permitted, on account of his bodily weakness, to choose which he would carry, he fixed upon a pannier of bread, which was to support them on their journey; but which was looked upon to be

be the heavieſt of all. His companions laughed at him for his choice; but when they had dined and afterwards ſupped out of his pannier upon their journey, and found that the proviſions were quite conſumed, and that he had nothing left to carry but an empty baſket, the ridicule was turned upon themſelves, and they began to conſider Æſop in a much more advantageous light than they had done before.

The next thing we find mentioned of him, is, the famous detection of the villanies of his fellow-ſervants; who having a mind to ſome choice figs, which were preſented to their maſter, confederated together to charge Æſop with the theft, and ſo ate them up with great greedineſs; and as they had agreed, boldly accuſed Æſop of the fact.

His maſter being incenſed at him, ordered him to be puniſhed; upon which he inſtantly had recourſe to a large draught of warm water, and intreated that his companions might be tried the ſame way: And the proof turned out according to his wiſh; for he brought up the water again, clear as he drank it, while the others brought up the figs along with it, and ſo met with the puniſhment and diſgrace deſigned for him.

Æſop's maſter having ſold all his ſlaves at Epheſus, except three, to wit, a muſician, an orator, and Æſop, he carried them to Samos, and ſhewed them there in the open market; and while they were there, one Xanthus, an eminent philoſopher of that city, came to ſee them, with a train of his diſciples at his heels. The philoſopher was highly pleaſed with the two youths, and aſked them about their profeſſion, and what they could do? The one told him he could do *any thing*, the other, that he could do *every thing*; and then Xanthus interrogated Æſop what *he* could do? *Nothing at all*, ſays he. How comes that ſays the philoſopher? My companions, ſays Æſop, undertake every thing, and if you purchaſe us all three there will be nothing left for me to do. Well! ſays Xanthus, but if I ſhould give money for you now, would you be good and honeſt? I will be that, ſays Æſop, whether you buy me or no. Xanthus was well enough pleaſed with the turn and quickneſs of his wit: But, ſays he, that unlucky ſhape of yours will

ſet people a whooting at you wherever you go. A philoſopher, ſays Æſop ſhould value a man for his mind, not for his body. This preſence of thought gave Xanthus a high opinion of the wiſdom of the man; and ſo he bade the merchant ſet him his loweſt price of that miſerable creature. Why ſays he, if you will bid me like a chapman, for either of the other two, you ſhall have this monſter into the bargain. The philoſopher without any more ado, paid the price agreed upon, and taking Æſop and his other purchaſe away with him, preſented him to his wife, who at firſt was greatly offended at his miſ-ſhapen appearance, and upbraided her huſband, as intending to affront her by ſo ill-favoured a preſent; but when ſhe came to hear his anſwers, and to know the value of his intellectual qualities, ſhe was better reconciled to him.

Xanthus a while after, attended by Æſop, went to a garden to buy ſome herbs; and the gardener, among other things, told him the admiration he was in to find how much faſter thoſe plants ſhot up that grew of their own accord, than than thoſe he ſet himſelf, though he took never ſo much care about them; and deſired him, that, as he was a philoſopher, he would tell him the meaning of it. Xanthus had no better anſwer at hand, than, That Providence would have it ſo. This not ſatisfying the gardener, and Xanthus ſeeing Æſop ſmile at it, he told him with a ſupercilious air, that it was below a philoſopher to buſy his head about ſuch trifles; but, ſays he, if you have a curioſity to be better informed, you ſhall do well to aſk my ſlave here, and ſee what he will ſay to you. Upon this the gardener put the queſtion to Æſop, who gave him his anſwer: The earth is in the nature of a mother to what ſhe brings forth of herſelf out of her own bowels; whereas ſhe is only a kind of ſtep-dame in the production of plants that are cultivated and aſſiſted by the help and induſtry of another: So that it is natural for her to withdraw her nouriſhment from the one, towards the relief of the other. The gardener, upon this, was ſo well ſatisfied, that he would take no money for his herbs, and deſired Æſop to make uſe of his garden for the future, as if it were his own.

After

After this, Xanthus and his wife, who lived together but upon indifferent terms in the general, had a very great quarrel, which was carried to such an height on her part, that she packed up her apparel, and other things, left his house, and went to her own relations; and no persuasions or intreaties could incline her to return.

Æsop seeing Xanthus much disturbed at her obstinacy, said, Come, master, pluck up a good heart, for I have a project that shall bring my mistress to you back again, with as good will as ever she went from you. Away immediately he hies to the market, among the butchers poulterers, fishmongers, confectioners, &c. for the best of every thing that was in season; giving out wherever he came, that his master's wife having run away from him, he had married another; and he was ordered to provide the wedding-feast. The news soon reached the ears of the run-away lady (for every body knew Æsop to be a servant in that family) and she was so moved upon it, that away she posts back to her husband, falls upon him with outrage of looks and language; and after the easing of her mind a little, No, Xanthus, says she, do not flatter yourself with the hopes of enjoying another woman while I am alive. Xanthus received her very gladly, and was highly pleased with Æsop's contrivance; nor was his mistress less pleased at so agreeable an imposture, and all was well again,

Xanthus would needs give a feast upon his reconciliation with his wife; and having invited his friends, ordered Æsop to procure the best provisions he could think of for their entertainment: And when they were all sat down to table, the first service was neats tongues sliced, which the philosophers took occasion to discourse and quibble upon in a grave formal way, as that *the tongue is the key of wisdom*, and the like. Xanthus upon this calls for a second course, and after that for a third, which was the last, and all were tongues, only several ways dressed. This put him into a furious passion. Thou villain, says he, what means this? How comes it, that in three courses we have nothing but tongues? Didst thou not boast of the elegant dishes thou hadst provided? Sir, says Æsop, your order was, that I should make the best provision

proviſion that I could think of for the entertainment of theſe excellent perſons; and if the tongue be the key that leads us into all knowledge, what could be more proper and ſuitable than *a feaſt of tongues for a philoſophical banquet?*

When Xanthus found the ſenſe of the table to be on Æſop's ſide. Well, my friends, ſays he, pray will you eat with me to-morrow, and I will try if I can mend your cheer? And pray, ſays he to Æſop, let it be your care to provide us a ſupper to-morrow, ſince you ſeem to be ſet on contradictions, of the very *worſt* things you can think of.

Next day the gueſts being again met, according to appointment, Æſop had provided them the very ſame ſervice of *tongues* over and over as they had the day before. Sirrah, ſays Xanthus in a paſſion, what is the meaning of this, that *tongues* ſhould be the *beſt* of meats *one* day, and the *worſt* the *other?* Why, Sir, ſays he, there is not any wickedneſs under the ſun that the *tongue* has not a part in; and you, of all men, have reaſon to know as well its miſchievous as good qualities, both as a huſband and a philoſopher. To what elſe is this banquet and that of yeſterday owing?—For was it not an evil tongue that occaſioned that great breach in your family, the making up of which you and your friends met to rejoice over? And was it not alſo owing to ſoft ſpeeches, and mild expoſtulations, from the ſame tongue, that all is well again? Surely, Sir, you have found a tongue to be the *beſt* and the *worſt* entertainment, if ever man did; and have cauſe to be ſatisfied with the banquet of both days.

The ſtory of Æſop's bringing a gueſt to his maſter Xanthus, who had no ſort of curioſity in him, we think not worth inſerting; for, beſides the improbability of it, it was more to be attributed, if true, to his good fortune than to his ſagacity, that he could find one ſo very incurious and careleſs of all that happened; for it was impoſſible, were he ever ſo good a phyſiognomiſt, that he could anſwer for all the events from the lines of the fellow's countenance, or to know that he would not be moved by the trials that would be put to him by Xanthus.

Xanthus,

Xanthus, after this, having ſome buſineſs at the public-hall, ſent Æſop to ſee if the court was ſat, and many people there. In his way a magiſtrate meets him, and aſks him whither he was going? Why, truly, ſays Æſop, I do not know. The magiſtrate took it that he bantered him, and ordered an officer to carry him to priſon. Well, ſays Æſop to the magiſtrate, is it not true now that I did not know whither I was going? The magiſtrate, pleaſed with the fancy, diſcharged him, and ſo he went forward to the hall; where, among a world of people, ſome gazing, ſome litigating, he ſaw one man, who had arreſted another for debt, agree to diſcharge his debtor on being paid down half what was owing. Æſop upon this went back and told his maſter, that he had been at the hall, and ſaw but one man there. Xanthus going himſelf to learn the truth of the matter, found the court extremely thronged; and turning ſhort upon Æſop, in great indignation, Sirrah, ſays he, are all theſe people come ſince you told me there was but one man here? It is very true, ſays Æſop, there was a huge crowd, and yet but one that I could ſee in that vaſt multitude who deſerved the name of man.

Xanthus, not long after, being in his cups, wagered all he was worth, that he would drink the ſea dry, and bound the extravagant wager with a very valuable ſignet-ring that he wore on his finger. Next day, finding what he had done, he was much concerned at his folly, eſpecially as he knew he was in ſuch hands as would make an advantage of it. Æſop undertook to bring him off, and put him in mind, that he had only conditioned to drink the ſea, but not the rivers and ſtreams that run into it; and bid him inſiſt on his adverſary's ſtopping all thoſe inlets, and then he might undertake to drink up the ſea.

Xanthus followed his advice, and the perſons who were choſen judges on the occaſion, agreed that there was juſtice in the plea; and ſo he got rid of the wager, and his antagoniſt was obliged to return the ring.

In the days of Æſop, the world was much addicted to augury; that is to ſay, to the gathering of omens from the cry and flight of birds. Upon this account it

it was, that Xanthus one day sent Æsop into the yard, and bade him look well about him; If you see two crows, says he, you will have good luck after it; but if you should chance to spy one single crow, it is a bad omen, and some ill will befide you. Æsop stept out, and came immediately back again, and told his master he had seen two crows. Hereupon Xanthus went out himself, and finding but one (for the other was flown away) he fell outrageously upon Æsop for making sport with him, and ordered him to be soundly lashed for it; but just as they were stripping him for the discipline, in comes one to invite Xanthus abroad to supper. Well, master, says Æsop, and where is the credit of your augury now; when I, that saw two crows, am to be beaten like a dog, and you, that saw but one, are going to make merry with your friends? The reason and quickness of this reflection pacified the master, and saved Æsop a severe correction.

The writers of Æsop's life, next give us a story of Æsop's finding hidden treasure, by virtue of an obsolete Greek inscription: But it contains such idle and childish play upon letters and words, that we choose to pass it over, only observing, that Xanthus, who on this occasion had promised him his liberty, and half the treasure, broke both promises with him, and gave him neither.

But it was not long before he obtained his liberty on another occasion, which was as follows: On a certain solemn day, the ring that had the town seal of Samos upon it was carried away by an eagle, which took it up in the air, and dropt it into the bosom of a slave. The Samians took this for a foreboding of some dismal calamity to the state, and, in a general consternation, they presently called a council of their wise men, and Xanthus among the rest, to give their opinions upon this mysterious accident. They were all at a loss what to think of it, only Xanthus desired some few days time for further consideration. And not finding himself capable of giving any probable solution of an incident so odd, he laid the matter before Æsop, who desiring to be introduced to the council, promised to give them satisfaction

on

on the point, and to take upon himself the issue of the matter, let it end either in credit or disgrace.'

Xanthus, willing to be freed from the uneasiness which the expectations of the city had given him, followed this advice, and next morning introduced Æsop to the council, many of which mocked and ridiculed his uncouth shape and appearance; but being at last convinced by his prudent observations, that the outward shape of a man ought not to be regarded, but the faculties of his mind only, they attended to what he had to say. He then told them, that when he considered the weight of the matter in hand, and the office he was then to perform, he imagined it would as little stand with their honour to take the opinion of a slave into their councils and debates, as it would with his condition to offer it; beside the risque he ran of his master's displeasure upon the event. But all this yet may be obviated, said he, my fears dispelled, my modesty gratified, and your own dignity preserved, only by making me a freeman before-hand, to qualify me for the function. They all said it was a reasonable motion, and presently treated about the price of his liberty, and ordered the Quæstors to pay down the money. When Xanthus saw the thing must be done, he could not decently stand higgling about the price; but making a virtue of necessity, he chose rather to *present* Æsop to the commonwealth then to *sell him*. The Samians took it very kindly, and Æsop was presently proclaimed a freeman. After which he discoursed upon the subject of the portent as follows:

I shall not need to tell so many wise and knowing men, that the eagle is a royal bird, and signifies a great king; that the dropping of the ring in the lesom of a slave, that has no power over himself, portends the less of your liberties, if you do not look to yourselves in time; and that some potent prince has a design upon you; and who should this be, said he, so likely as Crœsus king of Lydia, who is actually arming for some enterprise, as you well know; and which may as probably fall upon your state as any other?

In

In a very little time the event justified the prediction; for king Crœsus sent ambassadors to demand a tribute of the Samians, and threatened them with an invasion in case of a refusal. This affair came to be debated in the council, where the majority was rather for peace with slavery, than for running the risque of an invasion from so powerful a prince; but they would not come to a resolution yet, without first consulting Æsop what they had best to do; who gave them his thoughts upon it in words to this effect:

You have two ways before you, says he, one of which you must take; the first is, *The way of liberty, which is narrow and rugged at the entrance, but plainer and smoother still the further you go.* Secondly, *The way of servitude, that seems to be easy at first, but you will find it afterwards to be full of intolerable difficulties.* The Samians upon these words, declared themselves unanimously for liberty, and that since they were at present free, they would never make themselves slaves by their own consent: So the ambassadors departed, and a war was denounced.

When Crœsus came to understand the resolution the Samians had taken, and how inclinable they were to a compliance, till Æsop, by the power only of a few words, diverted them from it, he made an offer to the Samians, upon their sending Æsop to him, to put a stop at present to the course of his arms. When Æsop came to hear of this proposition, he told them, that he was not against their sending of him, provided only that he might tell them one story before he left them.

'In old time, says he, there happened to be a fierce 'war betwixt the wolves and the sheep; and the sheep, 'by the help of dogs, had rather the better of it. 'The wolves, upon this, offered the sheep a peace, 'on condition only, that they might have their dogs 'for hostages; the credulous sheep agreed to it, and as 'soon as ever they had parted with the dogs, the wolves 'broke in upon them, and destroyed them at pleasure.' See Fab. 44.

The

The Samians quickly apprehended the moral of this fable, and cried out, one and all, that they would not part with Æsop: But this did not hinder him however from putting himself aboard, and taking a passage for Lydia with the ambassadors.

On his arrival at the Lydian court, Æsop presented himself before the king, who looking upon him with equal contempt and indignation: Is this the man, says he, who hindered the king of Lydia from being master of Samos? And ordered him to be taken away, and put to death. When Æsop, with a reverence after the Lydian fashion, thus delivered himself:

'I am not here, says he, great king, in the quality of 'a man that is given up by his country, or under the 'compulsion of any force; but it is of my own accord 'that I am now come to lay myself at your majesty's 'feet, and with this only request, that you will vouchsafe 'me the honour of your royal ear and and patience but 'for a few words:'

"There was a boy hunting of locusts, and he had the "fortune to take a grasshopper. She finding he was "about to kill her, pleaded after this manner for her life: "Alas! says she, I never did any body an injury, and "never had it either in my will or my power to do it. "All my business is my song; and what will you be the "better for my death? The youth's heart relented, and "he set the simple grasshopper at liberty."

'Your majesty has now such another innocent creature 'before you: I pretend to nothing *but my voice, which 'I have ever employed, so far as in me lay, to the service 'of mankind.*'

The king was so much moved with Æsop's modesty and prudence, that he did not only give him his life, but bade him ask any thing farther that he had a mind to, and it should be granted him. Why then, says Æsop, with that veneration, gratitude, and respect that the case required, I do most humbly implore your majesty's favour for my countrymen the Samians. The king granted him his request, and confirmed it under his seal; and the piety of making that petition his choice, rather than wishing for any benefit to himself, was a farther

recommendation of him to his royal kindneſs and eſteem.

Æſop returned to Samos with the news of the peace; where he was welcomed with all the inſtances of joy and thankfulneſs imaginable; inſomuch that they erected a ſtatue for him with an inſcription, in honour of his memory.

From Samos he returned afterwards to Crœſus, for whoſe ſake he compoſed ſeveral of thoſe apologues that paſs to this day under his name.

His taſte inclined him to travel; but above all other places he had a mind to ſee Babylon. In order to gratify his wiſhes, he obtained letters of recommendation from Crœſus to the king there; who, according to Herodotus, was a friend and an ally of Crœſus's, and his name Labynetus, not Lycerus, as Planudes has miſtakenly handed it down to us. But his curioſity led him firſt to paſs through Greece, for the ſake of ſeeing the Seven Wiſe Men, whoſe reputation was at that time famous all over the world. He had the good luck in his travels to find them at Corinth, together with Anacharſis, and ſeveral of their followers and diſciples, where they were all treated by Periander, at a villa of his not far from the town. This encounter was to the common ſatisfaction of the whole company; the entertainment was philoſophical and agreeable; and among other diſcourſes, they had ſome controverſy upon the ſubject of government, and which was the moſt excellent form; Æſop eſpouſing *monarchy*, the *reſt* declaring for a *common-wealth*. He travelled thence, a while after, into Aſia, and then proceeded to Babylon, according to his firſt intention.

It was the faſhion in thoſe days for princes to exerciſe trials of ſkill in the putting and reſolving of riddles, and intricate queſtions; and he that was the beſt at the clearing or untying of ſuch knotty difficulties, carried the prize. Æſop's faculty lay notably that way, and rendered him ſo ſerviceable to the king, that it brought him both reputation and reward. It was his unhappineſs to have no children, for the comfort and ſupport of his old age; ſo that, with the king's conſent, he adopted a young man, who was well born, and ingenious enough, but poor; his name was Ennus. Æſop took as much care of his inſtruction as if he had been his own child,

child, and trained him up in thoſe principles of virtue and knowledge, that might moſt probably render him great and happy. But there is no working upon a flagitious and perverſe nature by kindneſs; and Ennus, after the manner of other wicked men, heaping one villainy upon another, counterfeited his father Æſop's name and hand to certain letters, where he promiſed his aſſiſtance to the neighbour princes againſt Labynetus. Theſe letters Ennus carries to the king; and charges his father with treaſon, though in appearance with all poſſible concern and reluctance; only that a ſenſe of his duty to his king and country, ſwallowed up all thoſe reſpects of reverence and modeſty that a ſon owes to a father.

The king took all theſe calumnies for inſtances of Ennus's affection to him, without the leaſt ſuſpicion of any fraud in the matter: So that, without any further enquiry, he ordered Æſop to be put to death. The perſons to whom the care of his execution was committed, being well aſſured of his innocence, took him out of the way, and gave out that he was dead.

Some few days after this, there came letters to Labynetus, from Amaſis the king of Egypt, wherein Labynetus was deſired by Amaſis, to ſend him a certain architect that could raiſe a tower that ſhould hang in the air, and likewiſe reſolve all queſtions. Labynetus was at a great loſs what anſwer to return; and the fierceneſs of his diſpleaſure againſt Æſop being by this time ſomewhat abated, he would often profeſs, that if the parting with one half of his kingdom could bring him to life again, he would give it. Hermippus and others, who had kept him out of the way, told the king, upon the hearing of this, that Æſop was yet alive: So they were commanded to bring him forth; and he no ſooner appeared, but he made his innocence ſo manifeſt, that Labynetus, in extreme diſpleaſure and indignation, commanded the falſe accuſer to be put to death with the moſt exquiſite torments; but Æſop, after all this, interceded for him, and obtained his pardon, upon a charitable preſumption, that the ſenſe of ſo great a goodneſs and obligation would yet work upon him

Upon Æsop's coming again into favour, he had the king of Egypt's letter given him to consider of, and advised Labynetus to send him for answer, That early the next spring he should have the satisfaction he desired. Things being in this state, Æsop took Ennus home to him again, and so ordered the matter, that he wanted neither counsels nor instructions, nor any other helps or lights, that might dispose him to the leading of a virtuous life, as will appear by the following precepts:

My son, says he, *worship God with care and reverence, and with a sincerity of heart, void of all hypocrisy or ostentation: Not as if that Divine Name and Power were only an invention to fright women and children; but know that God is omnipresent, true, and almighty.*

Have a care even of your most private actions and thoughts; for God sees through you, and your conscience will bear witness against you.

It is according to prudence, as well as nature, to pay that honour to your parents, that you will expect your children should pay to you.

Do all the good you can to all men, but in the first place to your nearest relations; and do no hurt however where you can do no good.

Keep a guard upon your words, as well as upon your actions, that there be no impurity in either.

Follow the dictates of your reason, and you are safe; and have a care of impotent affections.

Apply yourself to learn more, so long as there is any thing left that you do not know; and value good counsel before money.

Our minds must be cultivated as well as our plants; the improvement of our reason makes us like angels, whereas the neglect of it turns us into beasts.

There is no permanent and inviolable good, but wisdom and virtue, though the study of it signifies little without the practice.

Do not think it impossible to be a wise man, without looking over-sour. Wisdom makes men grave, but not morose or inhuman.

Keep

Keep faith with all men. Have a care of a lie, as you would of sacrilege. Great babblers have no regard either to honesty or truth.

Take delight in, and frequent the company of, good men; for it will give you a tincture of their manners.

Take heed of that vulgar error, of thinking that there is any good in evil. It is a mistake when men talk of profitable knavery, or of starving honesty; for virtue and justice carry all that is good and profitable along with them.

Let every man mind his own business; for curiosity is resistless.

Speak not ill of any body. You are no more to hear calumnies, than to report them. Besides that, they who practise the one, commonly love the other.

Propose honest things, follow wholesome counsels, and leave the event to God.

Let no man despair in adversity, nor presume in prosperity; for all things are changeable.

Rise early to your business, learn good things, and oblige good men; these are three things you shall never repent of.

Have a care of luxury and gluttony; but of drunkenness especially; for wine, as well as age, makes a man a child.

Watch for the proper opportunities of doing things; for there is nothing well done but what is done in season.

Love and honour kings, princes, and magistrates; for they are the bands of society, in punishing of the guilty, and protecting the innocent.

These, or such as these, were the lessons that Æsop read daily to his son; but so far was he from minding upon them, that he grew every day worse and worse, shewing that it is not in the power of art or discipline to rectify a perverse nature, or, as Euripides, says, to *make a man wise that has no soul.* But, however, according to Neveletus, he came soon after to be touched in conscience for his barbarous ingratitude, and died in a raging remorse.

The spring was now at hand, and Æsop was preparing for the task he had undertaken about the building of a tower in the air, and resolving all manner of

queſtions: But, ſays our judicious author, I ſhall ſay no more of that romantic part of the hiſtory, than that he went into Egypt, and acquitted himſelf of his commiſſion to Amaſis with great reputation. From thence he went back to Labynetus, laden with honours and rewards; from whom he got leave once more to viſit Greece; but upon condition of returning to Babylon the firſt opportunity.

When Æſop had almoſt taken the whole tour of Greece, he went to Delphos, either for the Oracle's ſake, or for the ſake of thoſe Wiſe Men who frequented that place. But when he came thither, he found matters to be quite otherwiſe than he expected, and ſo far from deſerving the reputation they had in the world for piety, learning, and wiſdom, that he found them immoral, ignorant, and conceited, and hereupon delivered his opinion of them under this fable:

'I find, ſays, he, the curioſity that brought me hither, 'to be much the caſe of people at the ſea-ſide, that ſee 'ſomething come hulling toward them a great way off 'at ſea, and take it at firſt to be ſome mighty matter; 'but, upon driving nearer and nearer the ſhore, it proves 'at laſt to be only a heap of weeds and rubbiſh, See *Fab.* 145.

The magiſtrates of the place took infinite offence at this liberty, and preſently entered into a conſpiracy againſt him, to take away his life, for fear he ſhould give them the ſame character elſewhere in his travels, that he had done there upon the place. It was not ſo ſafe, they thought, nor ſo effectual a revenge, to make him away in private; but if they could ſo contrive it, as to bring him to a ſhameful end, under a form of juſtice, it would better anſwer their deſign. To which purpoſe, they cauſed a golden cup belonging to their temple to be ſecretly conveyed into his baggage, when he was packing up to depart. He was no ſooner out of the town upon his journey, but he was purſued and taken by the officers, and charged with *Sacrilege*. Æſop denied the matter, and laughed at them all for a company of mad-men; but, upon the ſearching of his boxes, they found the cup, and ſhewed it to the people,

people, hurrying him away to prison in the middle of his defence.

They brought him the next day into court, where, notwithstanding the proof of his innocence came out as clear as the day, he was condemned to die; and his sentence was to be thrown headlong down a steep precipiece. After his doom was past, he prevailed upon them, with much ado, to be heard a few words, and so told them the story of the Frog and the Mouse, as it stands in the fable.

This wrought nothing upon the hearts of the Delphians; but as they were bawling at the executioner to dispatch, and do his office, Æsop, on a sudden, gave them the slip, and fled to an altar hard by there, in hopes the religion of the place might have protected him; but the Delphians told him, that the altars of the Gods were not to be any sanctuary to those that robbed their temples; whereupon he took occasion to tell them a fable of a beetle, who being injured by an eagle, found means to draw down vengeance upon her powerful oppressor, notwithstanding his superior might.

Now, says Æsop, after the telling of this fable, you are not to flatter yourselves, that the violators of holy altars, and the oppressors of the innocent, shall ever escape Divine Vengeance. This enraged the magistrates to such a degree, that they commanded the officers immediately to take Æsop from the altar, and carry him away to his execution. When Æsop found that neither the sanctity of the place, nor the clearness of his innocence, were sufficient to protect him, and that he was to fall a sacrifice to subornation and malice, he gave them yet one fable more as he was upon the way to execution:

'There was an old fellow, says he, who had spent his 'whole life in the country without ever seeing the town; 'he found himself weak and decaying, and nothing 'would serve, but his friends must needs shew him the 'town once before he died. Their asses were very well 'acquainted with the way, and so they caused them to 'be made ready, and turned the old man and asses loose 'without a guide, to try their fortune. They were

'overtaken

'overtaken upon the road by a terrible tempeſt, ſo 'that, what with the darkneſs and the violence of the 'ſtorm, the aſſes were beaten out of the way, and 'tumbled with the old man into a pit, where he had 'only time to deliver his laſt breath, with this exclamation; Miſerable wretch that I am, to be deſtroyed, ſince die I muſt, by the baſeſt of beaſts, by aſſes.'

And that's my fate now, continued Æſop, in ſuffering by the hands of a barbarous ſottiſh people, who underſtand neither humanity nor honour; and act contrary to the ties of hoſpitality and juſtice. But the gods will not ſuffer my blood to lie unrevenged, and I doubt not, but that in time the judgment of Heaven will give you to underſtand your wickedneſs by your puniſhment. He was ſpeaking on, but they puſhed him off headlong from the precipiece, and he was daſhed to pieces with the fall.

The Delphians, ſoon after this, were viſited with famine and peſtilence, to ſuch a degree, that they went to conſult the oracle of Apollo, to know what wickedneſs it was had brought theſe calamities upon them. The Oracle gave them this anſwer, That they were to expiate for the death of Æſop. In the conſcience of their barbarity, they erected a pyramid to his honour; and it is upon tradition, that a great many of the moſt eminent men among the Greeks at that time, went afterwards to Delphos, upon the news of the tragical end of Æſop, to learn the truth of the hiſtory; and found, upon enquiry, that the principal of the conſpirators had laid violent hands upon themſelves.

This is the account which the Greeks have given us of Æſop, of his deplorable end, and of the judgment which overtook thoſe who were the occaſion of it. But it having been already ſaid (*page* 15.) that ſome will have Æſop to be the ſame as Lochman among the Perſians, it may not be amiſs to give the ſubſtance of what the learned authors of the Univerſal Hiſtory, lately publiſhed with applauſe, have delivered us in relation to this point. Having firſt given that Perſian Sage his deſerved character for wiſdom, (Vol. V. *pag.* 371, 372, in octavo) they

they say; 'What we have reported is sufficient to shew, 'that there is a strong resemblance between the history 'of Lochman, as reported by the Eastern writers, and 'that of Æsop, as we find it written by the Greeks. Both 'were mean in their original; both slaves through the 'severity of fortune; both famous for their wisdom; 'and both delivered their maxims in the same manner; 'that is, by way of apologue. But there is a wide dif- 'ference between the times in which the oriental au- 'thors say Lochman lived, and those wherein the Greeks 'place Æsop. As to the first, it is generally allowed that 'Lochman lived in the reign of Solomon; whereas Æsop 'is said to have been cotemporary with Crœsus king of 'Lydia, and Solon the Athenian legislator. From the 'history of their lives, and the comparison of their 'fables, there is all the reason in the world to believe 'that Lochman and Æsop were the same person: The 'difficulty seems to lie here, Whether the Greeks stole 'him from the Orientals, or whether the Orientals took 'him from the Greeks. It seems most natural to believe 'the former, since in such cases the Greeks were found 'to have been notorious thieves, and to have altered 'every point of ancient history they were able to turn 'to their own advantage. Besides, the apologue was 'certainly the favourite mode of teaching in the East, 'long before that, or any other kind of learning, was 'known to the Greeks.'

The same authors give us, among several others, the following instance of the wisdom of Lochman: They tell us, That standing one day in the midst of a great throng of people, who were greedily listening to his wise precepts, a certain man of rank asked him, if he was not the black slave whom he had formerly seen tending sheep; and he answered in the affirmative. How then, said the gentleman, have you attained to so high a degree of virtue? By these three easy steps, says Lochman; *I have always spoken the truth*; *I have constantly kept my word*; *and I have never meddled in any thing which did not concern me.* A Persian poet also gives the like story of Lochman, which we have inserted of Æsop, in relation to the figs and warm water. Sir John Chardin tells us, that at this day the Persians are so

so fond of his fables, that they are the first things they teach their children, and spare no pains to make them enter into, and comprehend their meaning. And Mahomet himself has a whole chapter in his Koran in praise of this wise man; which makes his character and maxims not a little revered among the Mahometans of all nations.

One passage, relating to the duty of children to parents, we shall extract from this chapter, as a proper conclusion to the life of Æsop, and an useful preface to the following collection of fables: but which, at the same time, was probably borrowed from that excellent commandment of God, *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* That passage is to this purpose: 'Remember what Lochman has injoined to man, to honour his 'father and his mother; his mother bringeth him forth in 'sorrow, and weaneth him at two years old: Be not then 'forgetful of God's benefits: Honour thy father and thy 'mother; for thou shalt one day be judged before God.'

An Alphabetical INDEX to the FABLES.

A	page
AGE to be honoured	175
Ant and Fly	26
Ant and Grasshopper	128
Ape and Dolphin	104
Ape and Two Brats	146
Ape elected King	71
Apples and Horse-Turds	84
Arbitrary Eagle	183
Asses petition Jupiter	113
Ass and Frogs	114
Ass and Ungrateful Master	19
Ass and Whelp	13
Ass and Wolf	28
Ass, Ape, and Mole	20
Ass carrying an Image	162
Ass in Lion's Skin	133
Ass, Lion, and Cock	92
Astrologer admonished	61
Ax and Forest	35

B	page
BALD Cavalier	136
Bat and Weasel	31
Bat, Bramble, and Cormorant	89
Bear and Bees	176
Bee-master	102
Bees and Partridges	85
Belly and Members	36
Boar and Fox	167
Boar and Horse	39
Boasting Mule	72
Boy and False Alarms	50
Boy and Mother	63
Boy and Snake	81
Boy and Thief	144
Boys and Frogs	156
Bragging Traveller	56
Bull and Gnat	184
Bull and Goat	130

C page

CAT and Venus 41
City-mouſe and Country-mouſe 8
Cock and Fox 155
Cock and Precious Stone 1
Cocks and Partridges 56
Collier and Fuller 44
Conceited Muſician 107
Covetous Landlord 54
Covetous Man and Envious 142
Countryman and Aſs 173
Countryman and Hawk 147
Countryman and Hercules 145
Countryman and Snake 7, 23
Creatures petition Jupiter 53
Crow and Dog 108
Crow and Muſcle 10
Crow and Pitcher 143
Curſt Dog 135

D

DAW & Borrowed Feathers 25
Death and Old Man 71, 153
Diſappointed Milkmaid 190
Diſcontented Aſs 165
Dog and Butcher 41
Dog and Cat 162
Dog and Maſter 161
Dog and Shadow 4
Dog and Thief 18
Dog and Wolf 46, 73
Dog, Cock, and Fox 88
Dog in the Manger 52
Dog, Sheep, and Wolf 25
Drunkard and Wife 97

E

EAGLE and Daw 51
Eagle and Fox 48
Eagle and Owl 126
Eagle and Rabbits 185
Eagle and Tortoiſe 131
Eagle, Cat, and Sow 181

F

FARMER and Dogs 47
Father and Children 69
Father and Sons 42
Fawn and Stag 76
Fir and Bramble 141
Fiſherman and Pipe 70
Fiſherman's Good Luck ibid
Fiſhing in troubled Waters 104
Flattery Unreſtrainable 160
Fowler and Blackbird 62
Fowler and Partridge 82
Fowler and Pigeon 45
Fox and Bramble page 67
Fox and Carved Head 25
Fox and Cock 2
Fox and Goat 55
Fox and Grapes 80
Fox and Hedgehog 147
Fox and Huntſman 67
Fox and Raven 11
Fox and Stork 24
Fox that loſt his tail 66
Frog and Ox 27
Frog, Mouſe, and Kite 3
Frogs and Bulls 157
Frogs deſire a King 16
Frogs wanting Water 87
Frog turned Phyſician 134

G

GArdener and Dog 94
Gailed Aſs and Raven 115
Gnat and Bee 151
Gnat and Lion 121
Goat and Vine 92
Good Luck and Bad Luck 137

H

HARE and Sparrow 157
Hare and Tortoiſe 83
Hares and Frogs 21
Hares, Foxes, and Eagles 110
Hedgehog and Snake 150
Hen and Swallow 117
Horſe and Aſs 29
Hound and Maſtiff 106
Huntſman and Currier 177
Huſbandman and Stork 49

I

IGnorant Sea-paſſenger 19
Impertinent & Philoſopher 168
Impracticable League 175
Imprudent young Landlord 183
Induſtry and Sloth 154
Joy and Sorrow 172
Jupiter and Aſs 124
Jupiter and Bee 77
Jupiter and Farmer 171
Jupiter and Herdſman 120
Jupiter's Two Wallets 179

K

KIngsfiſher 103
Kite, Hawk, and Pigeons 17

L

LAden Aſs and Horſe 43
Lame Man and Blind 188
Lark and Fowler 89
Lark and her Young 37
Lion and Aſs 7

Lion and Bulls page 140
Lion and Frog 121
Lion and Man 143
Lion and Mouſe 13
Lion and other beaſts a hunting 5
Lion, Aſs, and Fox 116
Lion, Aſs, and Fox a hunting 123
Lion, Aſs, and Hare 152
Lion, Bear, and Fox 3
Lioneſs and Fox 75
Lion, Fox, and Wolf 96
Lion in Love 74

M

MAN and Satyr 145
Man and Two Wives 86
Man and Wooden God 68
Man bit by a Dog 59
Man bit by a Flea 85
Man of quality and Lion 95
Man turned into a Piſmire 110
Maſtiff and Aſs 163
Men and ſuppoſed Sea Wreck 111
Merchant and Mariner 180
Mercury and Carpenter 79
Mercury and Statuary 105
Mercury and Traveller 62
Miſer burying Gold 90
Mole and Dam 84
Mountain in Labour 19
Mountebank and Bear 159

N

NEutral Bat 34
Nightingale and Bat 99
No pleaſing Every-body 178
Nurſe and Froward Child 130

O

OAK and Willow 127
Old Crab and Young 132
Old Dog and Maſter 19
Old Lion 12
One-eyed Stag 91

P

PArtridges & Setting-Dog 186
Peacock and Crane 148
Peacock and Magpye 122
Pigeon and Crow 119
Pigeon and Painter 118
Pigeons and Hawks 153

R

RAven and Snake 109
Raven and Swan 98
Roaſted Cockles 100
Ruſtic and River 182

S

SCoffer puniſhed 57
Seamen praying to Saints 174
Sheep and Crow page 52
Shepherd and Young Wolf 95
Shepherd turned Merchant 64
Sick Kite and Mother 14
Sick Lion and Fox 39
Skittiſh Horſe 159
Snake and Crab 94
Snake and File 54
Splenetic Traveller 169
Stag and Lion 91
Stag drinking 33
Sun and Wind 132
Swallow and Crow 96
Swallow and other birds 15
Swallow and Spider 148
Swan and Stork 149

T

THere's no To-morrow 191
Thieves and Cock 108
Three pretended Penitents 188
Thunny and Dolphin 59
Traveller and Graſshoppers 185
Trumpeter taken priſoner 45
Two Cocks Fighting 75
Two Enemies at Sea 60
Two Friends and Bear 135
Two Men and Halter 158
Two Neighbour Frogs 102
Two Pots 137
Two Travellers and Money-bag 101
Two young Men and Cock 40
Tyger and Fox 139

U

UNdutiful young Lion 170

W

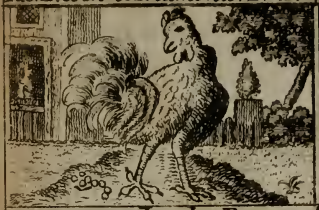
WASPS in Honey-pot 77
Wild Aſs and Tame 112
Wolf and Crane 6
Wolf and Fox 33
Wolf and Kid 106,124
Wolf and Lamb 2
Wolf and Lion 80
Wolf and Porcupine 167
Wolf and Sheep 109
Wolf and Sick Aſs 165
Wolf and Sow 18
Wolf, Kid, and Goat 22
Wolves, Sheep, and Dogs 35
Woman and Death 164
Woman and Fat Hen 58
Woman and Maids 126

Y

YOung Man and Swallow 78
Fables in all 240

THE

Fab 1. Cock & Diamond. P. 1.



2. Fox & Cock. P. 2.



3. Wolf & Lamb. P. 2.



4. Frog & Mouse. P. 3.



5. Lion & Bear. P. 3.



6. Dog & Shadow. P. 4.



7. Lion & Hunting. P. 5.



8. Wolf & Crane. P. 6.



9. Countryman & Snake. P. 7.



10. Lion & Ass. P. 7.



THE

FABLES OF ÆSOP.

FABLE I.

A COCK AND A PRECIOUS STONE.

AS a cock was ſcratching upon a dunghill, he turned up a precious ſtone. Well, ſays he, this ſparkling foolery to a jeweller would have been ſomething; but to me, a barley-corn is worth an hundred diamonds.

MORAL.

A wiſe man will always prefer things neceſſary before matters of curioſity, ornament, or pleaſure.

REFLECTION.

The moraliſts, as Sir Roger L'Eſtrange obſerves, will have *wiſdom* and *virtue* to be meant by the *diamond*; the *world*, and the *pleaſures* of it, by the *dunghill*; and by the *cock*, a *voluptuous man*, who abandons himſelf to his luſts, without any regard, either to the ſtudy, the practice, or the excellency of better things.

But, adds he, with the favour of the ancients, this fable ſeems rather to hold forth an emblem of induſtry and moderation. The cock lives by his honeſt labour: His ſcraping upon the dunghill is but working in his calling: The precious ſtone is only a gaudy temptation thrown in his way, to divert him from his buſineſs and his duty: He would have been glad, he ſays, of a barley-corn inſtead of it, and ſo caſts it aſide as a thing

not worth heeding. This is paſſing of a true eſtimate upon the matter, in prefering that which Providence has pronounced to be the ſtaff of life, before a glittering gewgaw, that has no other value than what vanity, pride, and luxury have ſet upon it. The price of the market, to a jeweller in his trade, is one thing; but the intrinſic worth of a thing, to a man of ſenſe and judgment, is another. Nay, that very lapidary himſelf, (as the ſame author obſerves) with a coming ſtomach, and in the cock's place, would have made the cock's choice. The doctrine, in ſhort, is, That we are to prefer things neceſſary before things ſuperfluous; the comforts and the bleſſings of Providence, before the dazzling and ſplendid curioſities of mode and imagination: And, finally, that we are not to govern our lives by fancy, but by reaſon.

FAB. 2. A FOX AND A COCK.

IT was the hard fortune once of a cock, to fall into the clutches of a fox. Reynard wanted to be upon his bones, but yet was deſirous of ſome plauſible colour for it. Sirrah, ſays he, what do you keep ſuch a ſcreaming o'nights for, that no body can ſleep near you? Alas! ſays the cock, I ſeldom wake any body, but when it is time for them to riſe and go about their buſineſs. This is a ſorry excuſe for me, ſays the fox; for doſt thou not alarm the whole neighbourhood ſo, that my life is continually in danger whenever I prowl this way in a morning? In truth, ſays the cock, that's not my intention when I crow, which is only to ſhew my joy for the dawn of the day, and to revive the hearts of my wives. Come, come, ſays Reynard, foxes don't live upon dialogues; and it is time for me to go to breakfaſt. At which word he gave him a gripe, and ſo made an end both of the cock and the ſtory.

FAB. 3. A WOLF AND A LAMB.

AS a wolf was lapping at the head of a fountain, he ſpy'd a lamb paddling at the ſame time a good way off down the ſtream, and away he runs open-mouth to it. Villain! ſays he, how dare you lie muddling the water that I'm drinking? Indeed, ſays the poor lamb, I did not think that my drinking here *be-*

low,

low, could have foul'd your water ſo far *above*. Nay, ſays t'other, you'll never leave your chopping of logic till your ſkin's turn'd over your ears, as your father's was ſix month's ago, for prating at this ſaucy rate; you remember it full well, Sirrah! If you'll believe me, Sir, quoth the innocent lamb, with fear and trembling, I was not come into the world then. Why, thou impudence, cries the wolf, haſt thou neither ſhame nor conſcience? But it runs into the blood of your whole race, Sirrah, to hate our family; and therefore you ſhall e'en pay ſome of your forefather's ſcores. And ſo, without any more ado, he tore the poor lamb in pieces.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

Innocence is no protection againſt the arbitrary cruelty of a tyrannical power; but reaſon and conſcience are, however, ſuch ſacred things, that the greateſt villanies are generally cloaked under the ſhadow of thoſe names.

REFLECTION.

Pride and cruelty never want a pretence to do miſchief. The plea of *not guilty* goes for nothing againſt power in ill hands: For accuſing is proving, where malice and force are joined in the proſecution. This is the lively image of a perverſe reaſon of ſtate, ſet up in oppoſition to truth and juſtice; but under the auguſt name and pretence, however, of both. When the cocks and the lambs lie at the mercy of foxes and wolves, they muſt never expect better quarter; eſpecially, as Sir Roger L'Eſtrange obſerves, where the heart's blood of the one is the nouriſhment and entertainment of the other.

FAB. 4. A FROG, MOUSE, AND KITE.

THERE happened once a terrible quarrel betwixt the frogs and the mice, about the ſovereignty of the fens; and whilſt two of their champions were diſputing it with their utmoſt might, down comes a kite powdering upon them, and gobbles up both together.

FAB. 5. A LION, BEAR, AND FOX.

A LION and a bear had ſo long fought over a fawn which they had killed, that they were glad to lie down and take breath. In which inſtant a fox paſſed that way; and finding how the caſe ſtood with

the two combatants, he seized upon the dead fawn, and scampered quite away with him. The lion and the bear, not being in condition to rise and hinder it, pass'd this reflection upon the matter: Here we have been worrying one another who should have the booty, till this treacherous fox has robb'd us both.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

When fools go together by the ears, knaves generally run away with the stakes.

REFLECTION.

This is no more than what we daily see in popular factions, where pragmatical fools commonly begin the squabble, and crafty knaves reap the benefit of it. There is very rarely any quarrel, either public or private, whether betwixt persons or parties, but a third watches, and hopes to be the better for it; and all is but according to the old proverb, *While two dogs are fighting for a bone, a third runs away with it.* It is none of the slightest arguments, therefore, in all disputes, for the necessity of a common peace, that the litigants generally tear one another in pieces for the benefit of some third interest; some rapacious kite or treacherous fox, which either by strength, or craft, masters or deceives both plaintiff and defendant, and carries away the booty.

FAB. 6. A DOG AND A SHADOW.

AS a dog was crossing a river with a piece of flesh in his mouth, he saw, as he thought, another dog under the water upon the very same adventure. He never considered, that the one was only the image of the other; but, out of a greediness to get both, he chops at the shadow, and loses the substance.

MORAL.

This is the case of unreasonable and insatiable desires, grasping at what is out of their reach, till they lose the good they had in possession. All covet all lose, *says the proverb.*

REFLECTION.

How wretched is the man who knows not when he is well, but passes away the peace and comfort of his life for the gratifying of a fantastical appetite or humour! Ambition is a ladder that reaches from earth to

to heaven; and the firſt round is but ſo many inches in a man's way towards the mounting of all the reſt. He is never well till he is at the top, and when he can go no higher, he muſt either hang in the air, or fall; for in this caſe he has nothing above him to aſpire to, nor any hold left him to come down by. Avarice is always beggarly; for a covetous man is ever in want. The deſire of *more* and *more* riſes by a natural gradation to *moſt*, and after that, to *all*; till in the concluſion we find ourſelves (like Alexander the Great, who, when he had conquered the world, wept that there were no more worlds to conquer) ſick and weary of all that is poſſible to be had, ſolicitous for ſomething elſe; and then, when we have ſpent our days in queſt of the meaneſt things, and often at the feet of the worſt of men, we find at the bottom of the account, that all the enjoyments under the ſun are not worth ſtruggling for. To return to the fable; Æſop's dog here was in the poſſeſſion of a very good breakfaſt, and he knew very well what he had in his mouth; but ſtill, either out of levity, curioſity, or greedineſs, he muſt be chopping at ſomething elſe, that he neither wanted nor underſtood, till he forfeited a real good for an imaginary one; and loſt all for a ſhadow.

FAB. 7. A LION AND OTHER BEASTS A HUNTING.

A LION, a wolf, a bear, and a fox went a hunting one day; and every one was to go ſhare and ſhare alike in what they took. They plucked down a ſtag, and divided him into four parts; but as they were entering each upon his dividend, Hands off, ſays the lion, *this* part is mine, by reaſon of my quality; *this*, becauſe I took moſt pains for it; *this*, again, becauſe I have occaſion for it; and if you diſpute the *fourth*, we muſt even pluck a crow about it: So the mouths of the confederates were all ſtopt, and they went away as mute as fiſhes.

MORAL.

Unequal leagues or alliances are generally to be avoided; for he who has the knife, that is to ſay, the power, in his hand, will commonly be his own carver.

REFLECTION.

The poor and the weak always lie at the mercy of the rich and the powerful: Such therefore ſhould have a

care how they engage themſelves in partnerſhips with men too mighty for them. *Find out ſomething*, ſays a court-minion to his humble ſuitor: He does ſo; and then, upon the diſcovery, the courtier ſeizes it for himſelf. Now this is only a ſtate-way of fiſhing with cormorants. Men in power plunge their clients into the mud with a ring about their necks; ſo that let them bring up what they will, nothing goes down with them that they ſhall be ever the better for. And when they come, in concluſion, to caſt up the profit and loſs of the purchaſe, or the project, what betwixt force, intereſt, and complaiſance, the adventurer eſcapes well, if he can but get off at laſt with his labour for his pains. All, in ſhort, that the lion ſays or does in this inſtance, is but according to the practice of men in power in a thouſand other caſes.

FAB. 8. A WOLF AND A CRANE.

A WOLF had got a bone in his throat, and promiſed a crane a very conſiderable reward to help him out with it. The crane did him the good office, and then claimed his promiſe. Why, how now, impudence! ſays the other, do you put your head into the mouth of a wolf, and then, when you have brought it out again ſafe and ſound, do you talk of a reward? Why, Sirrah, you have your head again; and is not that a ſufficient recompenſe?

MORAL.

He that has to do with wild beaſts (as ſome men are no better) and eſcapes with a whole ſkin, let him think himſelf well off.

REFLECTION.

It is a nice buſineſs to determine, how far wicked men in their diſtreſſes *may* be relieved; how far they *ought* to be relieved; and to what degree of loſs, labour, and difficulty, a ſober, a wiſe, and a good man may interpoſe to their redreſs. He may give, he may lend, he may venture, ſo far as generoſity and goodnature ſhall prompt him; provided always that he go no further than the conſcience of the cauſe, or of the action, will warrant him. A man is at liberty, it is true, to do many kind and friendly offices, which he is not bound to do: And if the largeneſs of his heart ſhall carry him

him beyond the line of neceſſary prudence, we may only reckon upon it as a more illuſtrious weakneſs.

The bone in the throat of the wolf may be underſtood of any ſort of pinch or calamity, either in body, liberty, or fortune. How many do we ſee daily, gaping and ſtruggling with bones in their throats, that when they have gotten them drawn out, have attempted the ruin of their deliverers! The world, in ſhort, is full of practices and examples to anſwer the intent of this fable; and there are thouſands of conſciences that will be touched with the reading of it, whoſe names are not written in their foreheads.

FAB. 9. A COUNTRYMAN AND SNAKE.

A COUNTRYMAN happened one hard winter to eſpy a ſnake under a hedge, that was half frozen to death. The good-natured man took it up, and kept it in his boſom, till warmth brought it to life again; and ſo ſoon as ever it was in condition to do miſchief, it bit the very man that ſaved its life. Ah, thou ungrateful wretch! ſays he, is that venemous ill-nature of thine to be ſatisfied with nothing elſe than the ruin of thy preſerver!

MORAL.

He that takes an ungrateful man into his boſom, is well nigh ſure to be betrayed; and it is not charity, but folly, to think of obliging the common enemies of mankind.

REFLECTION.

It is no new thing for good-natured men to meet with ungrateful returns. How many examples have we ſeen with our own eyes, of men that have been relieved out of ſtarving neceſſities, which have bereaved them both of ſpirit and ſtrength to do miſchief, who in requital have afterwards conſpired againſt the life, honour, and fortune of their patrons and redeemers! Now all this is no more than the proverb in a fable: *Save a thief from the gallows and he will cut your throat.*

FAB. 10. A LION AND AN ASS.

AN aſs was ſo hardy once, as to fall a mocking and braying at a lion. The lion began at firſt to ſhew his teeth, and to ſtomach the affront; but upon ſecond thoughts,

thoughts, Well, says he, jeer on, and be an ass still; take notice only by the way, that it is the baseness of your character that has saved your carcase.

MORAL.

It is below the dignity of a great mind to hold contests with people that have neither quality nor courage; to say nothing of the folly of contending with a miserable wretch, where the very competition is a scandal.

REFLECTION.

It does not become a man of honour and wisdom to contest with mean spirits, and to answer every fool in his folly. The very contest in this case sets the master and man upon the same level. And the lion was in the right not to cast away his displeasure upon an ass, where there was no reputation to be lost, and none to be gotten. Contempt, in such a case as this, is the only honourable revenge.

FAB. 11. CITY MOUSE AND COUNTRY MOUSE.

A COUNTRY mouse invited a city sister mouse of her's to a collation, where she spared for nothing that the place afforded; as mouldy crusts, cheese-parings, musty oat-meal, rusty bacon, and the like. The city dame was too well bred to find fault with her entertainment; but yet represented, that such a life was unworthy of a merit like hers; and letting her know how splendidly she lived, invited her to accompany her to town. The country mouse consented, and away they trudged together, and about midnight got to their journey's end. The city mouse shewed her friend the larder, the pantry, the kitchen, and other offices where she laid her stores; and after this carried her into the parlour, where they found, yet upon the table, the relics of a mighty entertainment of that very night. The city mouse carved her companion of what she liked best, and so to it they fell upon a velvet couch. The country mouse, who had never seen nor heard of such doings before, blessed herself at the change of her condition; when, as ill luck would have it, all on a sudden the doors flew open, and in comes a crew of noisy servants of both sexes, to feast upon the dainties that were left. This put the poor mice to their wits end how to save their skins; the stranger especially, who had never been in such

Fab. 11. City & Country Mouse. P. 8.



12. Crow & Muscle. P. 10.



13 Fox & Raven. P. 11.



14. The Old Lion. P. 12.



15. Ass. & Whelp. P. 13.



16. Lion & Mouse. P. 13



17 Sick Kite & her Mother. P. 14



18 Swallow & other Birds. P.



19. The Frogs desire a King. P. 16.



20. The Kite Hawk & Pigeons. P.



such danger before: But she made a shift however for the present to slink into a corner, where she lay trembling and panting till the company went away. As soon as e'er the house was quiet again: Well! my court sister, says she, if this be the sauce to your rich meats, I will even back to my cottage, and my mouldy cheese again; for I had much rather lie nibbling of crusts, without fear or hazard in my own hole, than be mistress of all the delicates in the world, and subject to such terrifying alarms and dangers.

MORAL.

This fable shows the difference between a court and a country life: The delights, innocence, and security of the one, compared with the anxiety, voluptuousness, and hazards of the other.

REFLECTION.

How infinitely superior are the delights of a private life to the noise and bustle of a public one! innocence, security, meditation, good air, health, and unbroken rest, are the blessings of the one; while the rages of lust and wine, noise, hurry, circumvention, falsehood, treachery, confusion, and ill health, are the constant attendants of the other.

The splendor and the luxury of a court are but a poor recompense for the slavish attendances, the invidious competitions, and the mortal disappointments that accompany it. The uncertain favour of princes, and the envy of those who judge by hearsay or appearance, without either reason or truth, make even the best sort of court-lives miserable. To say nothing of the innumerable temptations, vices, and excesses of a life of pomp and pleasure. Let a man but set the pleasing of his palate against the surfeits of gluttony and excess; the starving of his mind against a pampered carcase; the restless importunities of tale-bearers and back-friends against fair words and professions, only from the teeth outwards; let him, I say, but set the one in balance against the other, and he shall find himself miserable, even in the very height of his delights. To say all in a word, let him but set the comforts of a life spent in noise, formality, and tumult, against the blessings of a retreat with competency and freedom, and then cast up his account.

What

What man, then, that is not ſtark mad, will voluntarily expoſe himſelf to the imperious brow-beatings and ſcorns of great men! To have a dagger ſtruck to his heart in an embrace! To be torn to pieces by calumny; nay, to be a knave in his own defence! For the honeſter, the more dangerous in a vitious age, and where it is a crime not to be like the company. Men of that character are not to be read and underſtood by their words, but by their intereſts; their promiſes and proteſtations are no longer binding, than while they are profitable to them.

After all, to keep the fable more cloſely in view, let a man, with the country mouſe, reflect on the peace and ſafety of a rural retirement, and prefer, if he can, the inſecurity, noiſe, and hurry of a more exalted fortune.

FAB. 12. A CROW AND A MUSSEL.

One of your royſton crows lay battering upon a muſſel, and could not for his heart break the ſhell to come at the fiſh. A carrion crow in the interim comes up, and adviſes him to take the muſſel up in the air as high as he could carry it, and then let it fall upon a neighbouring rock, and its own weight, ſays he, ſhall break it. The royſtoner took his advice, and it ſucceeded accordingly; but while the one was upon the wing, the other ſtood lurching upon the rock, and flew away with the fiſh.

MORAL.

If a ſelfiſh man gives his neighbour good advice, it is ten to one but he has ſome end in it.

REFLECTION.

Men of frankneſs and ſimplicity are the moſt eaſily impoſed upon, where they have craft and treachery to deal withal. The impoſture, in truth, can hardly miſcarry, where there is a full confidence on the one ſide, and a plauſible diſpoſition on the other; wherefore it is good to be wary, but ſo as not to be inexorable, where there is but any place for charity itſelf to hope for better things: Not but that a ſupine credulous facility expoſes a man to be both a prey and a laughing-ſtock at once. It is not for us to judge of the good faith of mens intentions, but by the light we receive from their works.

works. We may ſet up this for a rule however, that where the adviſer is to be evidently the better for the counſel, and the adviſed in manifeſt danger to be worſe for it, there is no meddling. The crow's counſel was good enough in itſelf, but it was given with a fradulent intention.

FAB. 13. A FOX AND A RAVEN.

A FOX eſpied out a raven upon a tree with a morſel in his mouth, that ſets his chops a watering; but how to come at it was the queſtion. Oh thou bleſſed bird, ſays he, the delight of gods and of men!—and ſo he lays himſelf forth upon the gracefulneſs of the raven's perſon, and the beauty of his plumes, his admirable gift of augury, &c. And now, ſays the fox, if thou haſt but a voice anſwerable to the reſt of thy excellent qualities, the ſun in the firmament could not ſhew the world ſuch another creature. This nauſeous flattery ſet the raven a gaping as wide as ever he could ſtretch, to give the fox a taſte of his quail-pipe; but, upon the opening of his mouth, he drops his breakfaſt; which the fox preſently chopt up, and then bade him remember, that whatever he had ſaid of his beauty, he had ſpoken nothing yet of his brains.

MORAL.

There is hardly any man living that may not be wrought upon more or leſs by flattery; for we do all of us naturally overween in our own favour. But when it comes to be applied once to a vain fool, there is no end then can be propoſed to be attained by it, but may be effected.

REFLECTION.

Flattery calls good things by ill names, and ill by good; but it will never be out of credit, ſo long as there are knaves to give it, and fools to take it.

It is in itſelf an unmanly ſlaviſh vice; but it is much worſe yet for the alliance it has to hypocriſy; for while we make other people think better of *themſelves* than *they* deſerve, we make them think better of *us* too than *we* deſerve: For ſelf-love and vanity on the one hand, aſſiſts the falſeneſs and confidence on the other, while it ſerves to confirm weak minds in the opinion they had of themſelves before, and makes them parties effectually in a conſpiracy to their own ruin. The only benefit

or good of flattery is this; that by hearing what we *are not*, we may be inſtructed what we *ought to be*.

FAB. 14. AN OLD LION.

A LION that in the days of his youth and ſtrength had been very outrageous and cruel, came in the end to be reduced, by old age and infirmity, to the laſt degree of contempt; inſomuch that all the beaſts of the foreſt, ſome out of inſolence, others in revenge, fell upon him by conſent. He was a miſerable creature to all intents and purpoſes; but nothing went ſo near the heart of him in his diſtreſs, as to find himſelf battered by the heel of an aſs.

MORAL.

A prince who does not ſecure friends to himſelf while he is in power and condition to oblige them, muſt never expect to find friends when he is no longer able to do them any good.

REFLECTION.

The caſe of this miſerable old lion may ſerve to put great men in mind, that the wheel of time and of fortune is ſtill rolling, and that they themſelves are to lie down at laſt in the grave with common duſt, and without any thing to ſupport them in their age, but the reputation, virtue, and conſcience of a well-ſpent youth. But there are none yet that fall ſo unpitied, ſo juſt, ſo neceſſary, and ſo grateful a ſacrifice to the rage and ſcorn of common people, as thoſe that have raiſed themſelves upon the ſpoils of the public; eſpecially when that oppreſſion is aggravated with a wanton cruelty, and with blood and rapine, for the very love of wickedneſs.

The lion is here upon his death-bed, and may be compared to a great man in diſgrace; not a friend left him, nor ſo much as an enemy, with either fangs or claws, that does not ſtand gaping and waiting for a collop of him. Here he lies faint, poor, and defenceleſs, ſtung in his own thoughts with the guilty remembrance of the pride and riot of his youth; all his ſins, as well as all his adverſaries, his frauds and cruelties, broken vows, promiſes, and contracts, his tyranny and hypocriſy, and the iniquity, in fine, of all his counſels and practices for the ruin of the guiltleſs, flying in his face. And, to complete his miſery, he finds himſelf

reduced so low, as to be forced to bear the kicks and insults of the most despicable brutes of the field; and no one to assist, or even to pity him. Let the insolent great men of the world think of this in the height of their prosperity, and tremble!

FAB. 15. AN ASS AND A WHELP.

A GENTLEMAN had a favourite spaniel, that would be still toying and leaping upon him, and playing a thousand gambols, which the master was well enough pleased withal; insomuch that an ass in the house, that thought himself coarsely used, would needs go the same gamesome way to work, to curry favour for himself; but he was quickly given to understand with a good cudgel, the difference betwixt the one play-fellow and the other.

MORAL.

People who live by example, should do well to look very narrowly into the force and authority of the precedent: For that may become one man, which would be insufferable in another, under different circumstances.

REFLECTION.

All creatures have something in them peculiar to their several species; and that practice is still the best which is most consonant to the nature of them, by a common instinct. The fawnings of an ass are as unnatural as the brayings would be of a dog. He that follows *nature* is never out of his way; and that which is *best* for every man, is *fittest* for him too. He does it with ease and success; whereas all imitation is servile and ridiculous.

FAB. 16. A LION AND A MOUSE.

A GENEROUS lion, having got into his clutches a poor mouse, at her earnest supplication let her go. A few days after, the lion being hampered in a net, found the benefit of his former mercy; for this very mouse, in his distress, remembering the favour done her, set herself to work upon the couplings of the net, gnawed the threads to pieces, and so delivered her preserver.

MORAL.

It holds through the whole scale of the creation, that the great and little have need of one another.

REFLECTION.

There is nothing so little, but greatness may come to stand in need of it, and therefore prudence and discretion ought to have a place in clemency, as well as in piety and justice; it is *doing as we would be done by:* And the obligation is yet stronger, where there is gratitude as well as honour and good-nature in the case. The generosity of the lion and the gratitude of the mouse; the power, the dignity, and the eminence of the one, and the meanness of the other, do all concur to the making of this a very instructive fable. For, here is a recommendation of clemency and wisdom both in one: For the lion, in sparing the life of the *mouse*, saved his own; and has left us in this fable an instance of a grateful beast, that will stand upon record to the confusion of many an ungrateful man. No flesh, in fine, can be so great, as not to tremble under the force and consequences of this precedent.

FAB. 17. A SICK KITE AND HER MOTHER.

PRAY, mother, says a sick kite, give over these idle lamentations, and let me rather have your prayers. Alas! my child, says the dam, to which of the gods shall I pray, for a wretch that has robbed all their altars?

MORAL.

Nothing but the conscience of a virtuous life can make death easy to us; therefore there is no trusting to the distraction of an agonizing and death-bed repentance.

REFLECTION.

The kite's death-bed devotion and repentance works like the charity and piety of a great many penitents we meet with in the world; who, after the robbing of temples, the profaning of altars, and other violences of rapine and oppression, build an hospital, perhaps, or some little alms-house, out of the spoils of widows and orphans, put up a bill for the prayers of the congregation, wipe their mouths, and all is well again. But it is not for a wicked life to trust to the hazards of an uncertain state and disposition at the point of death. Grace must be very strong in these conflicts, wholly to vanquish the weakness of distressed nature. That certainly is none of the time to make choice of for the great work of reconciling ourselves to Heaven, when we

we are divided and confounded betwixt an anguiſh of body and of mind: And the man is worſe than mad, that ventures his ſalvation upon that deſperate iſſue. Beſides, people in that condition do but diſcharge themſelves of burdenſome reflections, as they do of the cargo of a ſhip at ſea that has ſprung a leak; every thing is done in a hurry, and men only part with their ſins in the one caſe, as they do with their goods in the other, to fiſh them up again ſo ſoon as the ſtorm is over.

FAB. 18. A SWALLOW AND OTHER BIRDS.

A SWALLOW (a bird famous for foreſight) ſeeing a country-fellow ſowing hemp in his grounds, called a company of little birds about her; and telling them what the man was about, and that the fowlers nets and ſnares were made with hemp or flax, adviſed them to pick it up in time, for fear of the conſequence. They neglected the advice till it took root; and then again, till it was ſprung up into the blade. Upon this, the ſwallow told them, that it was not yet too late to prevent the miſchief, if they would but ſet heartily about it; but finding that no heed was given to what ſhe ſaid, ſhe even bade adieu to her old companions in the woods, and betook herſelf to a city life, and to the converſation of men. This flax and hemp came in time to be gathered and wrought; and it was this ſwallow's fortune to ſee ſeveral of the very birds ſhe had forewarned, taken in nets made of the ſtuff; and then, too late, they became ſenſible of the folly of ſlipping their opportunity.

MORAL.

Wiſe men read effects in their cauſes; but fools will not believe them till it is too late to prevent the miſchief.

REFLECTION.

Many great evils have happened, as well to ſtates as private perſons, by neglecting to take timely precautions to prevent them. The greateſt miſchiefs have often taken their riſe from very ſmall beginnings; but meeting with no check in their firſt appearance, have ſoon carried all before them. The Ottoman hiſtory, to name no other, affords many ſignal inſtances of this; and a few hours have ſeen the greateſt prince in the world, for want of timely caution, tumbled from a throne to a

priſon. The doctrine may be extended alſo to forewarn us againſt cheriſhing the firſt temptations to vice, which not checked in time, it takes root, overſpreads the whole mind, and perhaps ends in our utter ruin. Little prognoſtics are not to be diſregarded, when the conſequences which they forebode are likely to be fatal.

FAB. 19. THE FROGS DESIRE A KING.

THE frogs, grown weary of liberty, petitioned Jupiter for a king. Jupiter, to try them, threw them down a log for their governor; which, upon the firſt daſh, frighted them all into the mud; nor durſt they for ſome time look out, till one frog, bolder than the reſt, put up his head, and looking about him, beheld how quiet their new prince lay. Upon this he calls his fellow-ſubjects together, tells them the caſe, and nothing would ſerve them then, but riding a-top of him; inſomuch that the dread they were in before, is now turned into inſolence and tumult. This king, they ſaid, was too tame for them, and Jupiter muſt needs be intreated to ſend them another. He did ſo, and ſent among them a ſtork, who ſoon revenged the cauſe of king Log, and devoured as many of his new ſubjects as came in his way. The remainder of the miſerable crew petitioned again for a new king, or to be reſtored to their former ſtate; but were told, that they had brought all theſe evils upon themſelves; and as the ſtork was ſent for their puniſhment, they muſt bear it as well as they could; for there was no remedy but patience.

MORAL.

No ſtate of life can pleaſe a diſcontented mind. Such people as know not when they are well, and covet change, can only blame themſelves, if that change makes their condition worſe.

REFLECTION.

This fable ſets forth, in every part but that of the log, the condition of the Iſraelites, who, not contented with the theocracy under which they had the happineſs to live, would needs have a king, in imitation of the neighbouring nations. Their deſire was complied with, and in king Saul God ſent them a *ſtork*, who, after a while, made them ſenſible of their folly.

We

We ſhould learn to be contented in our preſent ſtate, be it what it will; for a deſire of change once poſſeſſing the human mind, it knows not the end of it. God certainly knows what is beſt for us, and a reſignation to his providence is the ſureſt way to obtain his bleſſing, and to have no reaſon to lament that unſteadineſs and uneaſineſs of temper which often ſubjects mankind to the greateſt misfortunes; and makes them, in aſpiring after a new condition, wiſh themſelves once again reſtored to their firſt.

FAB. 20. THE KITE, HAWK, AND PIGEONS.

THE pigeons, finding themſelves perſecuted by the kite, made choice of the hawk for their guardian. The hawk ſets up for their protector; but, under the countenance of that authority, inſtead of carrying on a war with the kite, makes more havock in the dove-houſe in two days, than the kite could have done in as many months.

MORAL.

It is a dangerous thing for people to call in a powerful and ambitious man for their protector.

REFLECTION.

The evils we know, are oftentimes much better to be borne, than to ſeek redreſs where the damage may be much greater. How many perſons have had reaſon to wiſh they had rather borne the inſults of a powerful neighbour kite, than to ſeek redreſs from the more rapacious lawyer hawk!

To proceed to higher points; how many nations have had reaſon to wiſh they had borne the ſmaller inſults of power in their lawful princes, rather than have recourſe to arms, or, to be nearer the fable, to the protection of a foreign power, which ſeldom, in this caſe, fails to deſtroy the independency and liberty of thoſe who put themſelves under its protection! Let our old hiſtories tell us what our ancient Britons ſuffered purely from this cauſe, from the Picts down to the Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans, not to name, as we might do, other more recent inſtances.

FAB. 21. A DOG AND A THIEF.

As a gang of thieves were at work to rob a houſe, a maſtiff took the alarm, and fell a barking: One of the company ſpoke him fair, and would have ſtopt his mouth with a cruſt. No, ſays the dog, this will not do, for I will take no bribes to betray my maſter; nor will I, for a piece of bread in hand, forfeit the eaſe, ſatisfaction, and liberty of my whole life.

MORAL.

Fair words, preſents, and flatteries, are always to be ſuſpected to cover a baſe and wicked intent.

REFLECTION.

When ill men take up a fit of kindneſs all of a ſudden, and appear to be better natured than uſual, it is diſcreet to ſuſpect fraud, and to lay their words and their practices together. This moral reaches to all ſorts of truſtees whatſoever, whether they be counſellors, confidents, favourites, officers, ſoldiers, traders, or what you will; for there are good and bad of all kinds and profeſſions. So that Æſop's dog is a reproach to falſe men in general, and a good leſſon to ſervants of all denominations, not to part with their honeſty for a ſordid bribe; which will in the end ſubject them to never-ceaſing remorſe, and the ſtings of a wounded conſcience.

FAB. 22. A WOLF AND A SOW.

A WOLF very kindly offered to take care of the litter of a ſow that was juſt ready to lie down. The ſow as civilly thanked her for her love, and deſired ſhe would be pleaſed to ſtand off a little, and do her the good office at a diſtance, the greater the better.

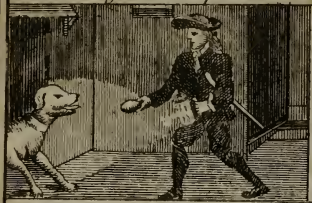
MORAL.

There are no ſnares ſo dangerous as thoſe which are laid for us under the name of good offices.

REFLECTION.

A wiſe man will keep himſelf upon his guard againſt the whole world, more eſpecially againſt a known enemy; but moſt of all, againſt that enemy who appears in the ſhape of a friend. The lying-down ſow would have made a very bad choice to have taken the wolf for her nurſe.

Fab. 21. Dog & Thief. P. 18.



22. Wolf & Sow. P. 18.



23. Mountain in Labour. Pag.



24. Ass & his Master. P. 19.



25. Old Dog & his Master. Pag



26 Ass Ape & Mole. P. 20.



27. Hares & Frogs. P. 21.



28. Wolf Kid & Goat. P. 22.



29. Dog Sheep & Wolf. P. 23.



30. Countryman & Snake. P. 23.



FAB. 23. A MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

A RUMOUR went that the mountain was in labour, and all the neighbourhood got together to see what a monstrous issue so great a mother would bring forth; when, behold! of a sudden, out run a ridiculous mouse.

MORAL.

Nothing so much exposes man to ridicule, as when, by vain blusters, he raises the expectation of all around him, and falls short in his performances.

REFLECTION.

What are all the extravagant attempts and enterprizes of vain men in the world, but morals, more or less, of this fable? What are mighty pretences, undertaken without consideration, and brought to no effect, but the vapours of a distemper, that, like sickly dreams, have neither issue nor connection? And the disappointment to the undertakers is not all neither; for men become ridiculous, instead of formidable, when this tympany is found to end in a blast, and their *mountain* produces only a *mouse*. We could give many recent instances of attempts that would fall under the lash of this fable, but choose to decline so invidious a task.

FAB. 24. AN ASS AND AN UNGRATEFUL MASTER.

A POOR ass that, what with age and hard labour, was worn to the stumps, had the ill-hap one day to make a false step, and to fall down under his load: His driver immediately falls upon him, and beats him almost to death for it. This, says the ass, is according to the course of the ungrateful world; one casual slip is enough to weigh down the faithful service of a long life.

FAB. 25. AN OLD DOG AND HIS MASTER.

AN old dog, that in his youth had led his master many a merry chace, and done him all the offices of a trusty servant, came at last, upon falling from his speed and vigour, to be loaden at every turn with blows and reproaches for it, and at last turned quite out of doors. Why, Sir, say the dog, my will is as good as ever, but my strength is gone; and you might with as much justice hang me up because I am old, as beat me because I am impotent.

MORAL.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

It is a barbarous inhumanity in great men to old servants, not to allow the paſt ſervices *of their* ſtrength *and* youth *capable of atoning for the* failings *natural to* age; *and to an age perhaps that has been haſtened on by hard labour and zeal in their ſervice.*

REFLECTION.

Theſe fables are a reproof to the ungrateful cruelty of thoſe who will neither forgive one ſlip nor reward a thouſand ſervices, but take more notice of a particular unlucky accident, than of a general laudable practice: But one ſtumble is enough to deface the character of an honourable life. And this is found in governments, as well as in courts and private families; with maſters and miſtreſſes, as well as in ſtates.

It is a miſerable thing when faithful ſervants fall into the hands of ſuch inſenſible and unthankful maſters; ſuch as value ſervices only by the profit they bring them, without any regard to the zeal, faith, and affection of the heart, and pay them with blows and reproaches in their age, for the uſe, ſtrength, and induſtry of their youth. Nay, human frailty itſelf is imputed to them for a crime, and they are treated worſe than beaſts for not being more than men. Here is an old drudging cur turned off to ſhift for himſelf, for want of the very teeth and heels that he had loſt in his maſter's ſervice: Nay, if he can but come off for ſtarving too, it paſſes for an act of mercy. It may be a queſtion now whether the wickedneſs, or the imprudence of this iniquity be the more pernicious? For, over and above the inhumanity, it is a doctrine of ill conſequence to the maſter himſelf, to ſhew the world how impoſſible a thing it is for a ſervant to oblige and pleaſe him: Nay, it is ſome ſort of temptation alſo to impiety and injuſtice, when virtue and duty come to be made dangerous.

FAB. 26. AN ASS, AN APE, AND A MOLE.

AN aſs and an ape were conferring on grievances. The aſs complained mightily for want of horns, and the ape was much troubled for want of a tail. Hold your tongues, both of ye, ſays the mole, and be thankful for what you have; for the poor blind moles are in a worſe condition than either of ye.

FAB. 27.

FAB. 27. THE HARES AND THE FROGS.

ONCE upon a time the hares found themſelves mightily unſatisfied with the miſerable condition they lived in. Here we live, ſays one of them, at the mercy of men, dogs, eagles, and I know not how many other creatures, which prey upon us at pleaſure; perpetually in frights, perpetually in danger; and therefore I am abſolutely of opinion, that we had better die once for all, than live at this rate in a continual dread that is worſe than death itſelf. The motion was ſeconded and debated, and a reſolution immediately taken, one and all, to drown themſelves. The vote was no ſooner paſſed, but away they ſcudded with that determination to the next lake. Upon this hurry there leapt a whole ſhoal of frogs from the bank into the water, for fear of the hares. Nay then, my maſters, ſays one of the graveſt of the company, pray let us have a little patience. Our condition, I find, is not altogether ſo bad as we fancied it; for there are thoſe, you ſee, that are as much afraid of us as we are of others.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

There is no contending with the orders and decrees of Providence. He that made us, knows what is fitteſt for us; and every man's own lot (well underſtood and managed) is undoubtedly the beſt.

REFLECTION.

Since nature provides for the neceſſities of all creatures, and for the well-being of every one in its kind; and ſince it is not in the power of any creature to make itſelf other than what by Providence it was deſigned to be; what a madneſs it is to wiſh ourſelves other than what we are, and what we muſt continue to be! Every atom of the creation has its place aſſigned: Every creature has its proper figure, and there is no diſputing with Him that made it ſo. *Why have I not this?* and, *Why have I not that?* are queſtions for a philoſopher of Bedlam to aſk; and we may as well cavil at the motions of the heavens, the viciſſitude of day and night, and the ſucceſſion of the ſeaſons, as expoſtulate with Providence upon any of the reſt of God's works. The *aſs* would have *horns*, the *ape* would have a *tail*, and the *hares* would be free from thoſe terrors which, timid

timid as they are, they give to others: But the *mole* on the one hand, and the *frogs* on the other, shew that there are others as miserable as themselves.

It may seem to be a kind of a malicious satisfaction, that one man derives from the misfortunes of another. But the philosophy of his reflection stands upon another ground; for our comfort does not arise from other peoples being miserable, but from this inference upon the balance, That we suffer only the lot of human nature; And as we are happy or miserable, compared with others; so other people are miserable or happy, compared with us; by which justice of Providence, we come to be convinced of the sin, and the mistake of our ingratitude. What would not a man give to be eased of the gout, or the stone? Or, supposing an incurable poverty on the one hand, and an incurable malady on the other, why should not the poor man think himself happier in his rags, than the other in his purple? But the rich man envies the poor man's *health*, without considering his *want*; and the poor man envies the other's *treasure*, without considering his *diseases*. What is an ill name in the world, to a good conscience within one's self? And how much less miserable, upon the wheel, is one man that is innocent, than another under the same torture, that is guilty? The only way for hares and asses, is to be thankful for what they are, and what they have, and not to grumble at the lot that they must bear in spite of their teeth.

FAB. 28. A WOLF, KID, AND GOAT.

A GOAT going out one morning, charged her kid, upon her blessing, not to open the door till she came back, to any creature that had not a beard. The goat was no sooner out of sight, but up comes a wolf to the door, that had over-heard the charge, and in a small pipe calls to the kid to let her mother come in. The kid smelt out the roguery, and bade the wolf shew his beard, and the door should be open to him.

MORAL.

There never was a hypocrite so disguised, but he had some mark or other to be known by.

REFLECTION.

REFLECTION.

Here is prudence, caution, and obedience recommended to us in the kid's refusal to open the door; and here is likewise set forth in the wolf, the practice of a fraudulent a villainous impostor. If the kid's obedience had not been more than her sagacity, she would have found, to her cost, the teeth of a wolf in the mouth of a pretended goat, and the malice of an enemy covered under the voice and pretence of a parent.

FAB. 29. A DOG, A SHEEP, AND A WOLF.

A DOG brought an action of the case against a sheep, for some certain measures of wheat, that he had lent him. The plaintiff proved the debt by three positive witnesses, the wolf, the kite, and the vulture. The defendant was cast in costs and damages, and forced to sell the wool from his back to satisfy the creditor.

MORAL.

It is not a straw matter, whether the main cause be right or wrong, or the charge true or false, where the bench, jury, and witnesses are in a conspiracy against the prisoner.

REFLECTION.

No innocence can be safe, where power and malice are in confederacy against it. There is no fence against subordination and false evidence. There is no living, however, without law; and there is no help for it in many cases, if the *saving equity* be over-ruled by the *killing letter* of it. It is the verdict that does the business, but it is the evidence, true or false, that governs the verdict. The only danger is the giving too much credit to the oaths of wolves, kites, and vultures; that is to say, of witnesses so profligate as to bring a scandal even upon truth itself.

FAB. 30. A COUNTRYMAN AND A SNAKE.

A SNAKE had bedded himself under the threshold of a country-house: A child of the family happened to set his foot upon it; the snake bit him, and he died of the bite. The father of the child made a blow at the snake, but missed his aim, and only left a mark behind him upon the stone where he struck. The countryman offered the snake, some time after this, to be friends again. No, says

ſays the ſnake, ſo long as I have this flaw upon the ſtone in my eye, and you the death of the child in your thoughts, there is no truſting of you.

MORAL.

There is a great difference betwixt charity and facility. We may hope well in many caſes, but let it be without venturing our all upon it.

REFLECTION.

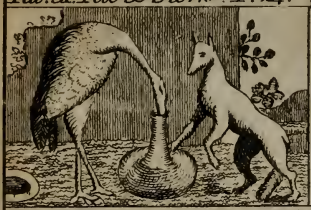
It is ill truſting a reconciled enemy; but it is worſe yet, to proceed at one ſtep from clemency and tenderneſs, to confidence and truſt; eſpecially where there are many memorials in ſight for hatred and revenge to work upon. Upon the whole matter, the countryman was too eaſy, in propoſing a reconciliation (the circumſtances duly conſidered); and the ſnake was much in the right on the other hand, in not entertaining it from a man that had ſuch a remembrance at hand ſtill to provoke him to a revenge. Wherefore it is highly neceſſary for the one to know how far, and to whom to truſt, and for the other to underſtand what he has to truſt to. It is a great error to take facility for good-nature: Tenderneſs without diſcretion is but a more pardonable folly.

FAB. 31. A FOX AND A STORK.

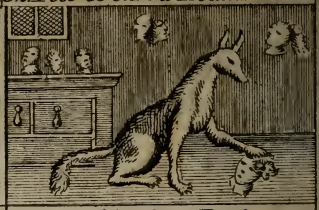
A FOX on a time invited the ſtork to a treat. They had ſeveral ſoups ſerved up in broad diſhes and plates; and ſo the fox fell to lapping himſelf, and bade his gueſt heartily welcome to what was before him. The ſtork found he was put upon, but ſet a good face upon his entertainment, and told his friend, that by all means he muſt take a ſupper with him that night in return. The fox made ſeveral excuſes, but the ſtork, in fine, would not be ſaid nay; ſo that at laſt he promiſed him to come. The collation was ſerved up in glaſſes with long narrow necks, and the beſt of every thing that was to be had. Come, ſays the ſtork to his friend, pray be free as if you were at home, and ſo fell to it very heartily himſelf. The fox quickly found this to be a trick, and ſneaked away under the conſciouſneſs of being juſtly requited for his own inhoſpitable frolic.

MORAL.

Fab. 31. Fox & Stork. P. 24.



32. Fox & Carv'd Head. P. 25.



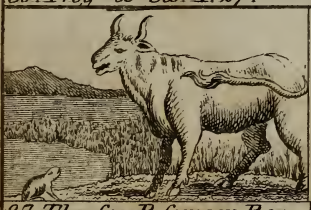
33. Daw in borrow'd Plumes. P. 25



34. Ant & Fly. P. 26.



35. Frog & Ox. P. 27.



36. Ass & Wolf. P. 28.



37 The Sea Passenger. P. 29.



38. Horse & Ass. P. 29.



39. Bat & Weazel. P. 31.



40. Bat stands Neuter. P. 32.



MORAL.

Nothing looks so silly as a crafty knave outwitted, and beaten at his own play.

REFLECTION.

This is the fate commonly of drolls and buffoons, that while they think to make sport with others, they serve only in the conclusion for a laughing-stock themselves.

The fox's frolic went too far, in regard it was both upon an invitation, and under his own roof. Now the return of the stork was only a warrantable revenge, even according to the rules of civility and good fellowship; for the fox's leading the humour, gave the other not only the provocation, but a kind of right to requite him in his own way: This may serve to reprove those liberties in conversation, that pass the bounds of good-nature, honour, honesty, and respect; and it further teaches us, that the laws of humanity and hospitality must be kept sacred upon any terms; for the wounding of a friend for the sake of a jest is an intemperance, and an immorality, not to be endured.

FAB. 32. A FOX AND A CARVED HEAD.

A FOX in a carver's shop, admiring, among others, one particular fine bust, said, after he had considered it very attentively, Well, thou art really a beautiful piece; but what pity it is that thou hast not one grain of sense!

MORAL.

A beautiful outside does not always indicate an ingenious mind. No faith is to be given to mere external appearances.

REFLECTION.

The excellency of the soul is above the beauty of the body, tho' more care is generally taken to cultivate the advantages of the one, than those of the other. To wrap up all in a word, The world itself is but a great shop of carved heads; and the fox's conceit will hold as well in human life, as in the fiction.

FAB. 33. A DAW AND BORROWED FEATHERS.

A DAW that had a mind to be sparkish, tricked himself up with all the gay feathers he could muster together; and valued himself upon them above all the birds

in the air. This got him the envy of all his companions, who, upon a discovery of the truth, fell to pluming of him by consent; and when every bird had taken his own feather, the silly daw was reduced to his primitive state, and found a lasting contempt added to his former poverty.

MORAL.

Where pride and beggary meet, people are sure to be made ridiculous in the conclusion.

REFLECTION.

Every thing is best, and every man happiest in the state and condition wherein Nature has placed them; but if daws will be setting up for peacocks, or asses for lions, they must expect and content themselves to be laughed at for their pains. The allusion of the daw here, and his borrowed feathers, extends to all sorts of impostors, vain pretenders, and romancers. It points also at the empty affectation of wit and understanding; in which case it fares, as it does with men who set up for quality, birth, and bravery, upon the credit of a gay outside. Such plagiaries as strut in the borrowed wit of other authors, may also be aptly compared to the daw in the fable.

FAB. 34. AN ANT AND FLY.

WHERE's the honour, or the pleasure in the world, says the fly, in a dispute for pre-eminence with the ant, that I have not my part in? Are not all temples and places open to me? Am not I the taster to gods and princes in all their sacrifices and entertainments? And all this without either money or pains? I trample upon crowns, and kiss what ladies lips I please. And what have you now to pretend to all this while? Vain boaster! says the ant, dost thou not know the difference between the access of a *guest*, and that of an *intruder?* for people are so far from liking your company, that they kill you as soon as they catch you. You are a plague to them wherever you come. Your very breath has maggots in it: And for the kiss you brag of, what is it but the perfume, of the last dunghill you touched upon, once removed? For my part, I live upon what is my own, and work honestly in the summer to maintain myself in the winter; whereas the whole course of your scandalous life

is

is only cheating or ſharping one half of the year, and ſtarving the other.

MORAL.

The happineſs of life does not lie ſo much in enjoying ſmall advantages, as in living free from great inconveniences. An honeſt mediocrity is the happieſt ſtate a man can wiſh for.

REFLECTION.

This fable marks out to us the difference betwixt the empty vanity or oſtentation, and the ſubſtantial ornaments of virtue. A man can hardly fancy to himſelf a truer image of a plain, honeſt, country ſimplicity, than the ant's part of the dialogue in this fable. She takes pains for what ſhe eats: wrongs nobody; and ſo creates no enemies; ſhe wants nothing; and ſhe boaſts of nothing; lives contented with her own, and enjoys all with a good conſcience. This emblem recommends to us the bleſſings of a virtuous privacy, according to the juſt meaſures of right nature, and, in few words, compriſes the ſum of a happy ſtate.

The fly, on the contrary, leads a lazy, voluptuous, ſcandalous, ſharking life, is hated wherever ſhe comes, and in perpetual fears and dangers. She flutters, it is true, from place to place, from feaſt to feaſt, brags of her intereſt at court, and of ladies favours: And what is this miſerable inſect at laſt, but the very picture of one of our ordinary trencher eſquires, that ſpends his time in hopping from the table of one great man to that of another, only to pick up ſcraps and intelligence, and to ſpoil good company! at other times officiouſly ſkipping up and down from levee to levee, and endeavouring to make himſelf neceſſary, wherever he thinks fit to be troubleſome!

FAB. 35. A FROG AND AN OX.

AS a huge ox was grazing in a meadow, an old envious frog that ſtood gaping at him hard by, called out to her little ones, to take notice of the bulk of that monſtrous beaſt; and ſee, ſays ſhe, if I do not now make myſelf the bigger of the two: So ſhe ſtrained once, and twice, and went ſtill ſwelling on, till in the concluſion ſhe over-ſtrained herſelf, and burſt.

MORAL.

Weak minds frequently fancy themſelves to be bigger or worthier than they are, and other people to be leſs or more unworthy; and the conſequence of this wretched pride is often fatal to the poſſeſſors of it, or at leaſt ſerves to render them contemptible in the eyes of thoſe whoſe good opinion they are fondeſt to engage.

REFLECTION.

This fable may be conſidered as a laſh upon thoſe that ſet up to live above their quality and fortune, and pretend to ſpend penny for penny with men of twenty times their eſtate, and therefore muſt needs burſt or become bankrupt in the concluſion. Pride and ambition often puſh men forward, not only to extravagances, but impoſſibilities, to the certain undoing of the weaker and the meaner, when they come to vie power and expence with thoſe that are too high and too many for them. So likewiſe men of mean abilities and high conceit, attempting to vie with their ſuperiors in wit and learning, often loſe the merit of a middle character for both, which but for their vanity they might have maintained; and ſo by aiming to be *more* than they are, make themſelves *leſs* than they would be allowed to be, had they known themſelves better. In ſhort, he that will arrogantly pretend to know *every thing*, will be treated by mankind as one that *knows nothing*; and ſo much the more juſtly, as he is quite ignorant of *himſelf*.

FAB. 36. AN ASS AND A WOLF.

An aſs had got a thorn in his foot, and for want of a better ſurgeon, who but a wolf at laſt offers himſelf to draw it out with his teeth: The aſs was no ſooner eaſed, but, knowing the wolf's bad intention, he gave his operator ſuch a kick under the ear with his ſound foot, that he ſtunned him, and ſo ran away as faſt as he could.

MORAL.

Harm watch, harm catch, *is but according to the common rule of equity and retaliation.*

REFLECTION.

There is no truſting to the fair words of thoſe that have both an intereſt and inclination to deſtroy us; eſpecially when the deſign is carried on under the maſk of a friendly

friendly office. It is but reasonable to oppose art to art; and where we suspect false play, to encounter one trick with another: Provided always that it be managed without breach of faith, and within the compass of honour, honesty, and good manners. The wolf had a design upon the ass; and the matter being brought to a trial of skill between them, the countermine was only an act of self-preservation.

FAB. 37. THE IGNORANT SEA-PASSENGER.

A MAN went passenger in a ship, who never was at sea before. It happened that a storm arose, and after a while the ship struck upon a sand-bank. Every one else was but too sensible of their danger; but he, for his part, thanked God for bringing him once more into shallow water, where he could feel the bottom.

MORAL.

We sometimes mistake that for our benefit, which in the end turns to our greatest misfortune.

REFLECTION.

Too much security in time of danger, is often of worse consequence than too much apprehension; for by the one an evil, though it may not be entirely avoided, may be in some measure lessened, by our being prepared to make the best of it; whereas the other, fearing nothing, makes no defence against the danger, and so is taken altogether unprepared. The rest of the crew, no doubt, as soon as the ship struck, set about furnishing themselves with the best means that offered, to save their persons and effects; while the poor stupid passenger, hugging himself with the hope of getting upon dry land, neglected to provide for his safety, and so, in all likelihood, fell a sacrifice to his own thoughtlessness and over-security.

FAB. 38. A HORSE AND AN ASS.

A PROUD pampered horse, bedecked with gaudy trappings, met in his course a poor creeping ass, under a heavy burden, that had chopt into the same track with him. Why, how now, Sirrah, says he, do you not see by these arms and trappings to what master I belong? And do you not understand, that when I have that master of mine upon my back, the whole weight of

the ſtate reſts upon my ſhoulders? Out of the way, thou ſlaviſh inſolent animal, or I will tread thee to dirt. The wretched aſs immediately ſlunk aſide, with this envious reflection between his teeth, *What would I give to change condition with that happy creature there!* This fancy would not out of the head of him, till it was his hap, a little while after, to ſee this very horſe doing drudgery in a common dung-cart. Why, how now, friend, ſays the aſs, how comes this about? Only the chance of war, ſays the other: I was a general's horſe, you muſt know; and my maſter carried me into a battle, where I was hacked and maimed; and you have here before your eyes the cataſtrophe of my fortune.

MORAL.

This fable ſhews the folly, and the fate, of pride and arrogance; and the miſtake of placing happineſs in any thing that may be taken away; as alſo the bleſſing of freedom in a mean eſtate.

REFLECTION.

People would never envy the pomp and ſplendor of greatneſs, if they did but conſider either the cares and dangers that go along with it, or the bleſſings of peace and ſecurity in a middle condition. No man can be truly happy, who is not every hour of his life prepared for the worſt that can befall him. Now this is a ſtate of tranquillity never to be attained, but by keeping perpetually in our thoughts the certainty of death, and the lubricity of fortune; and by delivering ourſelves from the anxiety of hopes and fears.

It falls naturally within the proſpect of this fiction to treat of the wickedneſs of a preſumptuous arrogance; the fate that attends it: the riſe of it; and the means of either preventing or ſuppreſſing it; the folly of it; the wretched and ridiculous eſtate of a proud man, and the weakneſs of that envy that is grounded upon the miſtaken happineſs of human life.

The folly both of the horſe and the aſs may be conſidered here; the one in placing his happineſs upon any thing that could be taken away; and the other, in envying that miſtaken happineſs, under the abuſe of the ſame ſplendid illuſion and impoſture. What ſignify gay furniture, and a pampered carcaſe, or any other outward

appearance,

appearance, without an intrinsic value of worth and virtue? What signify beauty, strength, youth, fortune, embroidered furniture, gaudy bosses, or any of those temporary and uncertain satisfactions that may be taken from us with the very next breath we draw? What assurance can any man have of a possession that every turn of state, every puff of air, every change of humour, and the least of a million of common casualties may deprive him of?

Moreover, the envy of the ass was a double folly; for he mistakes both the horse's condition and his own. 'Tis madness to envy any creature, that may in a moment become miserable; or for any advantage that may in a moment be taken from him. The ass envies the horse to-day; and, in some few days more, the horse comes to envy him: Wherefore let no man despair, so long as it is in the power either of death or of chance, to remove the burden. Nothing but moderation, and greatness of mind, can make either a prosperous or an adverse fortune easy to us. The only way to be happy is to submit to our lot; for no man can be properly said to be miserable, that is not wanting to himself. It is certainly true, that many a poor cobbler has a merrier heart in his stall, than a prince in his palace.

FAB. 39. A BAT AND A WEASEL.

A WEASEL had seized upon a bat, and the bat begged for life. No, no, says the weasel, I give no quarter to birds. Ah, says the bat, but I am a mouse, you see; look on my body else: And so she got off for that bout. The same bat had the fortune to be taken a while after by another weasel; and there the poor bat was forced to beg for mercy once again. No, says the weasel, no mercy to a mouse. Well, says the other, but you may see by my wings that I am a bird; and so the bat escaped in both capacities.

MORAL.

Where no treachery to another is designed, but only to save one's self from imminent danger, innocent subterfuges are not unworthy of an honest mind.

REFLECTION.

From this emblem we are to gather, that there are certain ways, cases, and occasions, wherein disguises and

and artificial evaſions are in ſome meaſure allowable, provided only, that there be no ſcandalous or malicious departure from the truth. This ſhifting of the bat in the paws of the two weaſels, was but making the beſt of what he had to ſay, and to ſhew for himſelf toward the ſaving of his life. There was no breach of faith, nor of truſt in it; no abandoning of a duty, no thought of treachery, nor, in effect, any thing more in it, than a fair prudent way of putting out falſe colours.

FAB. 40. THE NEUTRAL BAT.

UPON a deſperate and doubtful battle betwixt the birds and the beaſts, the bat ſtood neuter, till he found that the beaſts had the better of it, and then went over to the ſtronger ſide. But it came to paſs afterwards (as the chance of war is various) that the birds rallied their broken troops, and carried the day; and away he went then to the other party, where he was tried by a council of war as a deſerter; ſtript, baniſhed, and finally condemned never to ſee day-light again.

MORAL.

This fable is a true emblem of a baſe time-ſerver; and the bat richly merited the puniſhment he met with.

REFLECTION.

The caſe of the bat in this fable, which Sir *Roger L'Eſtrange* has ſubjected to the ſame moral and reflection with thoſe in the former, is, however, widely different; and therefore we have made two different fables and applications to them. In the former, the bat having fallen into the clutches of two different weaſels at two different times, made uſe of her natural ſhape and appearance to paſs for a bird at one time, and a mouſe at the other, and this for the laudable purpoſe only of ſaving her life. But the bat in the preſent fable acted the part of a baſe miſcreant; for he injured his party, firſt, in withdrawing his aſſiſtance; ſecondly, in going over to the ſtronger ſide, and declaring himſelf an enemy when his fellows had the worſt of it. His judgment, in fine, as we have obſerved in the moral, was juſt; and if all double-dealers and deſerters were ſerved as this bat was, it would be an example of terror to renegadoes, and of encouragement to honeſt men.

Fab. 41. Wolf & Fox. P. 33.



42. Stag Drinking. P.33.



43. Snake & File. P.34.



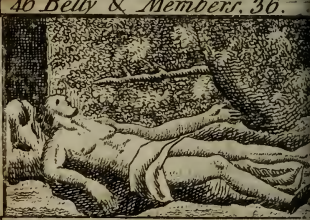
44 Wolves Sheep & Doas 35



45 An Axe & a Forrest. 35.



46 Belly & Members. 36.



47. Lark & her Young. 37.



48 Sick Lion & Fox. 39.



49. Boar & Horse. 39.



50. Two young Men & Cook. 40.



FAB. 41. A WOLF AND A FOX.

A WOLF having got together a large ſtore of proviſions, kept cloſe for fear of loſing it. Why, how now, friend, ſays a fox, who had long watched for his abſence, we have not ſeen you abroad at the chace this many a day! Why truly, ſays the wolf, I have an indiſpoſition that keeps me much at home, and I hope I ſhall have your prayers for my recovery. The fox ſeeing his ſtratagem would not take, goes to a ſhepherd, and tells him where he might ſurpriſe a wolf. The ſhepherd followed his directions, and deſtroyed poor *Iſgrim*. The fox immediately repairs to his cell, and takes poſſeſſion of his ſtores; but he had little joy of the purchaſe; for in a very ſhort time the ſame ſhepherd did as much for the fox, as he had done before for the wolf.

MORAL.

This fable ſhews us the juſt fate that attends the treachery even of one traitor to another.

REFLECTION.

The wolf, it muſt be owned, well deſerved the fate he met with for his continual depredations, and the violence by which he had poſſeſſed himſelf of his ſecreted ſtores; but then he did not deſerve it from the fox, who was as great a villain as himſelf, and wanted only to play at rob-thief with him. But the ſhepherd, who was in all likelihood the ſufferer, revenged the wolf upon the fox, and did juſtice upon both. When thieves fall out among themſelves, it is pleaſant to ſee one diamond cut with another.

FAB. 42. A STAG DRINKING.

A STAG drinking upon the banks of a clear ſtream, and ſeeing his image in the water; Well! ſays he, if theſe pitiful ſhanks of mine were but anſwerable to this branching head, I cannot but think how I ſhould defy all my enemies. The words were hardly out of his mouth, but he diſcovered a pack of dogs coming full cry towards him. Away he ſcours acroſs the fields, caſts off the dogs, and gains a wood; but preſſing through a thicket, the buſhes held him by the horns, till the hounds came in and plucked him down. The laſt thing he ſaid was this; What an unhappy fool was

I, to take my friends for mine enemies, and mine enemies for my friends! I trusted to my head that has betrayed me; and I found fault with my legs, that would otherwise have brought me off.

MORAL.

He that does not thoroughly know himself, may be well allowed to make a false judgment upon other matters that nearly concern them.

REFLECTION.

We are taught here, how apt vain men are to glory in that which commonly tends to their loss, their misfortune, their shame, and sometimes to their very destruction; and how frequently they are liable to take their best friends for their enemies. The stag prided himself in his horns, which afterwards shackled, and were the ruin of him; but made slight of his slender shanks, that if it had not been for his branching head, would have been his security.

FAB. 43. A SNAKE AND A FILE.

A SNAKE having got into a smith's shop, licked a file till she made her tongue bloody, and imagining it was the file that bled, she licked the more eagerly. In conclusion, when she could lick no longer, she fell to biting, till she broke her teeth, and then was obliged to leave off, half dead, and quite disarmed of all her defences.

MORAL.

Every man should consider his own strength and abilities, and act accordingly.

REFLECTION.

This fable sets out the malignity of some spiteful people, who take so much pleasure in the design of hurting others, as not to feel and understand that they only hurt themselves. This is the case of those who will be trying masteries with their superiors, and biting of that which is too hard for their teeth. There is no contending with an adversary that is either insensible or invincible; and the rule holds in matters, not only of actual force and violence, but of fortune and good name; for it is no better than downright madness, to strike where we have no power to hurt, and to contend where we are sure to be worsted.

FAB. 44. WOLVES, SHEEP, AND DOGS.

A WAR was once waged between the ſheep and the wolves; and ſo long as the ſheep had the dogs for their allies, they were a match for their enemies. The wolves finding this, ſent ambaſſadors to treat about a peace, and till it could be concluded, hoſtages were given on both ſides; the dogs on the part of the ſheep, and the wolves whelps on the other part. While they were upon treaty, the whelps fell a howling; the wolves cried out treaſon; and pretending an infraction in the abuſe of their hoſtages, fell upon the ſheep in the abſence of their dogs, and made them pay for the improvidence of leaving themſelves without a guard.

MORAL.

It is the higheſt degree of folly to think of eſtabliſhing an alliance among thoſe that nature herſelf has divided, by an irreconcileable hatred.

REFLECTION.

To take this fable in a political ſenſe; a nation which puts itſelf out of condition of defence, in caſe of a war, muſt expect a war. Such a ſtate as leaves a people at the mercy of an enemy, is worſe than war itſelf. There's no truſting to the formalities of an outſide peace, upon the pretended reconciliation of an implacable enemy. Chriſtian religion bids us forgive: But Chriſtian prudence bids us have a care too whom we truſt. It is juſt in the world as it is the apologue: Truces and ceſſations are both made and broken for preſent convenience; and we may lay down this for an undoubted truth, that there can never want a colour for a rupture, where there is a good will to it, and it is found to be the party's intereſt.

FAB. 45. AN AX AND A FOREST.

A CARPENTER begged of the foreſt only ſo much wood as would make a handle to his ax. The matter ſeemed ſo ſmall, that the requeſt was eaſily granted; but when the timber trees came to find that the whole wood was to be cut down by the help of this handle; *There's no remedy*, they cried, *but patience, when people are undone by their own folly.*

MORAL.

MORAL.

Nothing goes nearer a man in his misfortunes, than to find himself accessary to his own ruin.

REFLECTION.

It is a folly inexcusable, to deliver up ourselves needlessly into another's power: For he that doth any thing rashly, must be taken in equity of construction to do it willingly, for he was free to deliberate or not. It is well to consider, first, What the thing is that is desired: Secondly, The character of the person that asks: Thirdly, What use may be made of it to the detriment of him that grants the request, and so to resolve how far, in duty, humanity, prudence, and justice, we are to comply with it. Wheresoever there is moral right on the one hand, no secondary interest can discharge it on the other. A prisoner upon parole must surrender himself upon demand, though he die for it, A man may contribute to his own ruin several ways; but in cases not to be foreseen, and so not to be prevented, it may be his misfortune, and the man not to blame. We are not to omit precaution however, for fear an ill use should be made of those things that we do even with a good intention; but we are still to distinguish betwixt what may *possibly*, and what will *probably*, be done, according to the best measures we can take of the end of asking; for there would be no place left for the functions of human society, if the possibility of abusing a kindness should *wholly* divert us from the exercise of charity and good nature. There may be great mischief wrought, yet without any thing of a previous malice, that it may be hazardous to yield, even where the proposal is wholly innocent. There may be other propositions again, that were originally designed for snares to the short-sighted and credulous; now it is the art of life critically to discern the one case from the other.

FAB. 46. THE BELLY AND MEMBERS.

The hands and the feet on a time were in a desperate mutiny against the belly. They knew no reason, they said, why the one should pamper itself with the fruit of the other's labour; and if the belly would not work for company, they would be no longer at the

the charge of maintaining it. Upon this mutiny, they kept the body so long without nourishment, that all the parts suffered for it: Insomuch that the hands and feet came in conclusion to find their mistake, and would have been willing then to have done their office; but it was now too late, for the body was so pined with over-fasting, that it was wholly out of condition to receive the benefit of a relief; and so they all perished together.

MORAL.

The public is but one body, and the fable cautions the particular members of it how they withdraw themselves from their duties, till it shall be too late for their superiors to make use of them for their mutual advantage.

REFLECTION.

This allegory is a political reading upon the state and condition of civil communities, where the members have their several offices, and every part contributes respectively to the preservation and service of the whole. There are degrees of dignity, no doubt, in both cases, and one part is to be subservient to another, in the order of civil policy, as well as in the frame of man's body; so that they are mightily out of the way, who take eating and drinking, in a course of vicissitude, with other offices of nature that are common to beasts with men, to be the great business of mankind, without any further regard to the faculties and duties of our reasonable being: For every member has its proper and respective function assigned it, and not a finger suffers, but the whole feels it. This apologue was used to very good purpose by Menenius Agrippa, who appeased a tumult by it among the commoners of Rome, who, till they heard it, were resolved not to obey their magistrates, nor contribute to the public good and safety, because they could not live as magnificently as their superiors.

FAB. 47. A LARK AND HER YOUNG.

In a field of corn, just ripe for reaping, a lark had a brood of young ones, and when she went abroad to forage for them, laid a strict charge upon her little ones to pick up what news they could get against she came back again. They told her, at her return, that the

owner of the field had been there, and ordered his *neighbours* to come and reap the corn. Well, says the old one, there is no danger as yet. They told her the next day that he had been there again, and desired his *friends* to do it. Well, well, says she, there is no hurt in that neither; and so she went out progging for provisions as before. But upon the third day, when they told their mother, that the *master* and his *son* agreed to come next morning and do it themselves; nay, then, says she, it is time for look about us: As for the *neighbours* and *friends*, I fear them not; but the *master* I am sure will be as good as his word, *for it is his own business*.

MORAL.

He that would be sure to have his business well done, must either do it himself, or see the doing of it. Many a good servant is spoiled by a careless master. Men will be true to themselves, how faithless soever to one another.

REFLECTION.

Interest does more in the world than faith and honesty; for men are more sensible in their own case than in another's, Neither, in truth, is it reasonable that another should be more careful of *me* than I am of *myself*. Every man's business is best done, when he looks after it with his own eyes.

The morality of this caution is as good a lesson to *governments* as to *private families*. For a prince's leaving his business wholly to his ministers; without a strict eye over them in their respective offices and functions, is as dangerous an error in politics, as a master's committing all to his servant is in œconomics. It is effectually a transferring of the authority, when a superior trusts himself implicitly to the faith, care, honesty, and discretion of an inferior. To say nothing of the temptation to bribery and false-dealing, when so much may be gotten by it, with so little hazard either of discovery or punishment. Beside the desperate inconvenience of setting up a wrong interest, by drawing applications out of the proper channel, and committing the authority and duty of the master to the honesty and discretion of the servant.

FAB. 48. THE SICK LION AND FOX.

A LION that had got a politic fit of ſickneſs, made it his obſervation, that of all the beaſts in the foreſt, the fox never came to him: And ſo he wrote him word how ill he was, and how mighty glad he ſhould be of his company. The fox returned the compliment with a thouſand prayers for his recovery; but as for waiting upon him, he deſired to be excuſed; for, ſays he, I find the traces of abundance of feet going into your majeſty's palace, but not one of any that comes back again.

MORAL.

We ought to be careful how we place a confidence in the complimental profeſſions of cunning and deſigning men; for it is half the buſineſs of one part of the world to put tricks upon the other.

REFLECTION.

It is a difficult point to hit the true medium betwixt truſting too much and too little. Indeed there is no living without truſting ſomebody or other, in ſome caſes, or at ſome time or other: But then if people be not cautious, whom, when, and wherein, the miſtake may be pernicious; for there muſt be ſomewhat of a truſt to make way for a treachery; ſince no man can be betrayed that does not either believe, or ſeem to believe. The heart of a man is like a bog, it looks fair to the eye; but when we come to lay any weight upon it, the ground is falſe under us. Nothing could be more obliging and reſpectful than the lion's letter was, in terms and appearance; but yet there was death in the intent and meaning of it.

FAB. 49. A BOAR AND A HORSE.

A BOAR wallowing in the water where a horſe was going to drink, a quarrel enſued upon it. The horſe went preſently to a man, to aſſiſt him in his revenge. They agreed upon the conditions, and the man immediately armed himſelf and mounted the horſe, who carried him to the boar, and had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing his enemy killed before his face. The horſe thanked him for his kindneſs; but as he was juſt about to take leave, the man ſaid he ſhould have further occaſion for him, and ſo ordered him to be tied up in the ſtable.

The horſe came by this time to underſtand, that his liberty was irretrievably gone, and that he had paid dear for his revenge.

MORAL.

Many a man, to avoid a preſent and leſs evil, runs blindfold into a greater; and there are others, who, to gratify a revengeful humour, lay a foundation for repentance for all their life to come.

REFLECTION.

This fable lays open to us the folly of thoſe people who make themſelves ſlaves to their revenge; for no man ſhould be ſo angry with another, as to hurt himſelf for it. We ſhould likewiſe conſider, that there is more hazard in the ſuccour of a new powerful friend, than in the hoſtility of an old dangerous enemy; and that the greateſt empires upon the face of the earth have had their riſe from the pretence of taking up quarrels, or keeping the peace among their neighbours.

FAB. 50. TWO YOUNG MEN AND A COOK.

TWO young fellows ſlipping into a cook's ſhop, one of them ſtole a piece of fleſh, and conveyed it to the other. The maſter miſſed it immediately, and challenged them with the theft: He that took it, ſwore he had none of it; and he that had it, ſwore as deſperately that he did not take it. Well, my maſters, ſays the cook, theſe frauds and fallacies may paſs upon men, but there is an eye above that ſees through them.

MORAL.

There is no putting of tricks upon an all-ſeeing Power; as if he that made our hearts, and knows every corner of them, could not ſee through the childiſh fallacy of a double meaning.

REFLECTION.

This fable concerns thoſe who think to deceive God with fallacies of words, equivocations, mental reſervations, and double meanings; but though frauds and perjuries may paſs upon men for a ſeaſon, they are yet as open as the light to Him that ſearches the heart. It is a great unhappineſs that children ſhould be ſo much addicted (as we ſee they are) to this way and humour of ſhuffling: But it is a greater ſhame and miſchief for parents, governors, and tutors, to encourage and allow them

51. Dog & Butcher P. 41.



52. Cat & Venus P. 41.



53. Father & his Sons 42.



54. Ass laden & Horse 43.



55. A Collier & Fuller 44.



56. Fowler & Pigeon 45.



57. Trumpeter taken Prisoner 45.



58. Dog & Wolf. P. 46.



59. Farmer & his Dogs. 47.



60. Eagle & Fox P. 48.



them in it, whereby they effectually train them up to one of the moſt dangerous corruptions they are capable of; no leſs than that of laying the very ground-work of a falſe and treacherous life. Truth is the great leſſon of reaſonable nature, both in philoſophy and in religion. The knack of faſt and looſe paſſes with a world of fooliſh people for a turn of wit; but they are not aware all this while of the deſperate conſequences of an ill habit, which in the end may bring men to infamy, diſgrace, and ruin.

FAB. 51. A DOG AND A BUTCHER.

AS a butcher was buſy about his meat, a dog ſnatches a piece of meat off of the block, and runs away with it. The butcher ſeeing him upon the gallop with it, Hark ye, friend, ſays he, you may even for this once make the beſt of your purchaſe; I ſhall take care to lay my meat out of your reach another time.

MORAL.

He that loſes any thing, and gets wiſdom by it, is a gainer by the loſs.

REFLECTION.

Affliction makes a man both honeſt and wiſe; for the ſmart brings him to a ſenſe of his error, and the experiment to the knowledge of it. We have I know not how many adages to back the reaſon of this moral, *Hang a dog upon a crab-tree*, we ſay, *and he will never love verjuice.* And then we have it again in that common ſaying, *The burnt child dreads the fire.* It is wandering many times, whether it be in opinion, or in travelling, that ſets a man right in his judgment, and brings him into the way with greater pleaſure. The dog's running away with the fleſh, does as good as bid the owner look better to it another time.

FAB. 52. A CAT AND VENUS.

A YOUNG fellow was ſo paſſionately in love with a cat, that he made it his humble ſuit to Venus to turn her into a woman. The transformation was wrought in the twinkling of an eye, and out ſhe comes a very handſome laſs. The ſot took her home to his bed; but was hardly laid down, when the goddeſs having a mind to try if the cat had changed her manners with her ſhape,

turned a mouſe looſe into the chamber. The new-made woman, upon this temptation, ſtarted out of the bed, and directly made a leap at the mouſe; upon which Venus turned her into a puſs again.

MORAL.

The extravagant tranſports of love, and the propenſions of nature, are unaccountable; the one carries us out of ourſelves, and the other brings us back again.

REFLECTION.

This fable lays before us the charms and extravagances of a blind love, which covers all imperfections, and conſiders neither quality nor merit. And let the defect be never ſo groſs, it either palliates or excuſes them. The new-made woman's leaping at the mouſe, tells us alſo how impoſſible it is to make nature change her bias, and that *if we ſhut her out at the door, ſhe will come in at the window.*

Here is the image of a wild and fantaſtical love, which ſhews the effects of an ungoverned fancy; for men do not ſee, nor taſte, nor find the thing they love, but they *create* it. They faſhion an idol, in what figure or ſhape they pleaſe; ſet it up, worſhip it, dote upon it, purſue it, and, in fine, run mad for it. How many paſſions have we ſeen in the world, ridiculous enough to anſwer all the follies of this imagination!

We are further given to underſtand, that no counterfeit is ſo ſteady and ſo equally drawn, but nature by ſtarts will ſhew herſelf through it; for puſs, even when turned into a madam, will be a mouſer ſtill. And this may ſerve ſtill farther to caution ſome inconſiderates againſt marrying, as many have done, a lewd or immoral woman, fondly believing ſhe will be reclaimed by the obligation, and be truer to her *huſband* than ſhe was to *herſelf* and *virtue*; when it is much more likely, that, on the very firſt temptation, ſhe will, with the cat in the fable, return to her evil habits again.

FAB. 53. A FATHER AND HIS SONS.

A VERY honeſt man happened to have a contentious brood of children. He called for a rod, and bade them try one after another, with all their force, if they could break it. They tried, and could not. Well, ſays he,

he, unbind it now, and take every twig of it apart, and see what you can do that way. They did so, and with great ease, by one and one, they snapped it all to pieces. This, says he, is the true emblem of your condition: Keep together, and you are safe; divide, and you are undone.

MORAL.

The breach of unity puts the world into a state of war, and turns every man's hand against his brother; but so long as that band holds, it is the strength of all the several parts of it gathered into one, and is not easily subdued.

REFLECTION.

This fable intimates the force of union, and the danger of division. Intestine commotions have destroyed many a powerful state; and it is as ruinous in private affairs as it is in public. A divided family can no more stand, than a divided commonwealth; for every individual suffers in the neglect of a common safety. It is a strange thing, that men should not do that under the government of a rational spirit, and a natural prudence, which wolves and bears do by the impulse of an animal instinct. For they, we see, will make head, one and all, against a common enemy; whereas the generality of mankind lie pecking at one another, till, one by one, they are all torn to pieces, never considering (as this fable teaches) the necessity and benefits of union.

FAB. 54. A LADEN ASS AND A HORSE.

AS an horse and an ass were upon the way together, the ass cried out to his companion to ease him of his burden, though never so little; he should fall down dead else. The horse would not; and so his fellow-servant sunk under his load. The master, upon this, had the ass flayed, and laid his whole pack, skin and all, upon the horse: Well, says, he, this judgment is befallen me for my ill-nature, in refusing to help my brother in the depth of his distress.

MORAL.

It is a Christian, a natural, a reasonable, and a political duty, for all members of the same body to assist one another.

REFLEC-

REFLECTION.

The buſineſs of the world is more or leſs the buſineſs of every man that lives in it: And if the great and the ſmall do not join in a common aſſiſtance, where the matter requires it, they are in danger to be both undone: So that it is for the good of the whole, that the ſeveral parts take care one of another.

The churliſh humour of this horſe is too much the humour of mankind, even in the caſe of ſervants or ſubjects to the ſame maſter; but ſuch is the vanity that many people draw from their trappings, and mere nominal diſtinctions, that they look down upon their fellows, as if they were not all made of the ſame clay. To ſpeak the plain truth of the matter, it is the little people that ſupport the great; and when the foundation fails, the whole fabric muſt either drop into rubbiſh, or otherwiſe reſt upon the ſhoulders of their ſuperiors.

FAB. 55. A COLLIER AND FULLER.

A FULLER had a very kind invitation from a collier to come and live in the houſe with him. He gave him a thouſand thanks for his civility, but told him, that it would not ſtand with his convenience; for, ſays he, as faſt as I can make any thing clean, you'll be ſmutting it again.

MORAL.

It is a neceſſary rule in alliances, matches, ſocieties, fraternities, friendſhips, partnerſhips, commerce, and all manner of civil dealings and contracts, to have a ſtrict regard to the humour, the nature, and the diſpoſition of thoſe we have to do withal.

REFLECTION.

There can be no thought of uniting thoſe that nature itſelf has divided. And this caution holds good in all the buſineſs of a ſober man's life; as marriage, ſtudies, pleaſures, ſociety, commerce, and the like; it is, in ſome ſort, with friends (pardon the coarſeneſs of the illuſtration) as it is with dogs in couples. They ſhould be of the ſame ſize and humour, and that which pleaſes the one, ſhould pleaſe the other: But if they draw ſeveral ways, and if one be too ſtrong for the other,

they

they will be ready to hang themſelves upon every gate or ſtile they come at.

FAB. 56. A FOWLER AND A PIGEON.

AS a country fellow was making a ſhoot at a pigeon, he trod upon a ſnake, which bit him by the leg. The ſurprize ſtartled him, and away flew the bird.

MORAL.

A miſchievous intent is ſometimes repaid in the very act, and when it is leaſt expected.

REFLECTION.

The miſchief that we meditate to others falls commonly upon our own heads, and ends in a judgment as well as a diſappointment. Take the fable another way, and it may ſerve to mind us how happily people are diverted many times from the execution of a malicious deſign, by the grace and goodneſs of a preventing providence. A piſtol's not taking fire may ſave the life of a good man; and the harmleſs pigeon had died if the ſpiteful ſnake had not broken the fowler's aim: That is to ſay, Good may be drawn out of evil, and an innocent life may be ſaved, without having any obligation to its preſerver.

FAB. 57. A TRUMPETER TAKEN PRISONER.

UPON the rout of an army a trumpeter was made a priſoner, and as the ſoldiers were about to cut his throat, Gentlemen, ſays he, why ſhould you kill a man that kills nobody? You ſhall die the rather for that, cries one of the company, for being ſuch a raſcal as to ſet other people together by the ears, without fighting yourſelf.

MORAL.

He that provokes and incites to miſchief, is the doer of it. It is the man that kills me; the bullet is only a paſſive inſtrument to ſerve his end that directs it.

REFLECTION.

This is to reprove thoſe (according to the old moral) who ſtir up men in power to do public miſchief; which is much worſe than any man's doing a private one himſelf; and only a ſafer way of committing greater outrages.

The

The trumpeter's plea is an arrant ſhuffle. He that countenances, encourages, or abets a miſchief, does it. Shall he that gives fire to the train, pretend to waſh his hands of the hurt that is done by the playing off the mine? Human corruptions are as catching as powder; as eaſily inflamed, and the fire afterwards as hard to be quenched. That which a man cauſes to be done, he does himſelf; and it is all a caſe, whether he does it by practice, precept, or example.

FAB. 58. A DOG AND A WOLF.

A HAGGARD carrion of a wolf, and a jolly dog, with good fleſh upon his back, fell into company together upon the king's highway. The wolf was very inquiſitive to learn how he brought himſelf to that happy plight. Why, ſays the dog, I keep my maſter's houſe from thieves, and I have very good meat, drink, and lodging, for my pains. Now, if you will go along with me, and do as I do, you may fare as I fare. The wolf agreed, and ſo away they trotted together; but as they were jogging on, the wolf eſpied a bare place about the dog's neck, where the hair was worn off. Brother, ſays he, how comes this, I pr'ythee? Oh! that's nothing, ſays the dog, but the fretting of my collar a little. Nay, ſays the other, if there be a collar in the caſe, I know better things than to ſell my liberty for a cruſt.

MORAL.

We are ſo dazzled with the glare of a ſplendid appearance, that we can hardly diſcern the inconveniences that attend it: It is a comfort to have good meat and drink at command, and warm lodging: But he that ſells his freedom for the gratifying of his appetite, has but a hard bargain of it.

REFLECTION.

In this emblem are ſet forth the bleſſings of liberty, and the ſordid meanneſs of thoſe wretches who ſacrifice their freedom to their luſts and their palates. What man in his right ſenſes, who has wherewithal to live free, would make himſelf a ſlave to ſuperfluities! We are liable to be impoſed upon by outſides and appearances, for want of ſearching things to the bottom, and examining what really they are, and what they only ſeem to be.

In

In order, therefore, to form a right judgment on this head; children ſhould be early inſtructed, according to their age and capacity, in the true eſtimate of things, by oppoſing the good to the evil, and the evil to the good; and compenſating or qualifying one thing with another. What is plenty without health? What is eaſe without plenty? And what is title or greatneſs, with carking thoughts and a troubled mind to attend it? What does that man want, who has enough! Or what is he the better for a great deal, who can never be ſatisfied? By this method of ſetting what we have againſt what we have not, the equity of Providence will be made manifeſt, and to all manner of purpoſes juſtified, when it ſhall appear upon the balance, that every man has his ſhare in the bounties of Heaven to mankind.

This may be inculcated as to the general doctrine of this fable; but the particular one, as we have hinted, ſets forth the value of liberty, which is an ineſtimable jewel, to be preferred to all the reſt; for what are health, plenty, grandeur, titles, or any other worldly good, if they are to be held by ſo precarious a tenure, as the arbitrary will of a tyrant? Or, to come nearer ſtill to the fable, What wiſe man would deſire to indulge his appetites at the price of his freedom?

FAB. 59. A FARMER AND HIS DOGS.

A CERTAIN farmer was put to ſuch a pinch in a hard winter for proviſion, that he was forced to feed himſelf and his family upon the main ſtock. The ſheep went firſt to pot; the goats next; and after them, the oxen; and all little enough to keep life and ſoul together. The dogs called a council upon it, and reſolved to ſhew their maſter a fair pair of heels for it, before it came to be their turn: For, ſaid they, after he has cut the throats of our fellow-ſervants, that are ſo neceſſary for his buſineſs, it can never be expected that he will ſpare us.

MORAL.

There is no contending with neceſſity, and we ſhould be very tender how we cenſure thoſe who ſubmit to it. It is one thing to be at liberty to do what we would, and another to be tied up to do what we cannot avoid.

REFLEC-

REFLECTION.

The old moral obſerves upon this fable, That it is a common thing for a maſter to ſacrifice a ſervant to his own eaſe and intereſt; but that there is no meddling with men of ſuch an inhoſpitable humour, that the domeſtics, how faithful ſoever, can never be ſecure.

But Sir Roger L'Eſtrange is of opinion, that this moral is a force upon the natural bias of the fable: For, ſays he, the farmer has no liberty of choice before him, but either to do what he does, or to periſh: And in ſo doing (with all reſpect to the rules of honeſty) he does but his duty, without any way incurring the character of an ill-natured man or a cruel maſter. But, as the ſame author obſerves, there may be alſo another doctrine raiſed from it; which is, that, in caſes of extreme difficulty, the laws of conveniency and ordinary practice muſt give place to the laws of neceſſity. And this, adds he, was the naked truth of the farmer's caſe, who would have been glad to have had no occaſion to kill any of his beaſts.

FAB. 60. AN EAGLE AND A FOX.

A TREATY of amity and good neighbourhood was once ſtruck up betwixt the eagle and the fox. Notwithſtanding which, one day when the fox was abroad a-foraging, the eagle fell into her quarters, and carried away a whole litter of cubs at a ſwoop. The fox returned time enough to ſee the eagle upon the wing, with the prey in her foot, and to ſend many a heavy curſe after her. In a very ſhort time after, upon the ſacrificing of a goat, the ſame eagle made a ſwoop at a piece of fleſh upon the altar, and took it away to her young: But ſome live coals, it ſeems, that ſtuck to it, ſet the neſt on fire. The birds were not as yet fledged enough to ſhift for themſelves, but upon ſprawling and ſtruggling to get clear of the flame, down they tumbled, half-roaſted, into the mouth of the fox, who ſtood gaping under the tree, expecting ſuch an event, and who greedily devoured them in the very ſight of the dam.

MORAL.

Juſtice is a ſacred thing, and no neceſſity can warrant the violation of it.

REFLECTION.

Fab. 61. Husbandman & Stork. P. 49



62. Boy & False Alarms. 50



63. Eagle & Daw. P. 51.



64. Dog in the Manger. P. 52.



65. Sheep & Crow. P. 52.



66. Creatures Petition Jupiter. 53.



67. Covetous Landlord. P. 54.



68. Fox & Goat. P. 55.



69. Cocks & Partridge. 56.



70. Bragging Traveller. P. 56.



REFLECTION.

This is to give great men to underſtand, that no power upon earth can protect them in the exerciſe of tyranny and injuſtice, but that, ſooner or later, vengeance will overtake oppreſſors. It likewiſe condemns treachery, and breach of faith, even towards the moſt perfidious: And further ſuggeſts to us, that when people are in a train of wickedneſs, one ſin treads upon the heel of another. The eagle begins with an invaſion upon the rights of hoſpitality, and common faith; and at the next ſtep advances to ſacrilege, in robbing the altar. And what follows upon it now, but a divine judgment, that makes her acceſſary to the firing of her own neſt, and avenges the cauſe of the fox, though one of the falſeſt of creatures.

FAB. 61. AN HUSBANDMAN AND STORK.

A POOR innocent ſtork had the ill hap to be taken in a net that was laid for geeſe and cranes. The ſtork's plea for herſelf was ſimplicity and piety, the love ſhe bare to mankind, her duty to her parents, and the ſervice ſhe did in picking up venomous creatures. This may be all true, ſays the huſbandman, for what I know, but as you have been taken with ill company, you muſt expect to ſuffer with it.

MORAL.

Our fortune and reputation require us to keep good company; for as we may be eaſily perverted by the force of bad examples, wiſe men will judge of us by the company we keep. What ſays the proverb? Birds of a feather will flock together.

REFLECTION.

A man may lie under ſome obligation of duty and reſpect, to viſit, eat, and correſpond with, many people that he does not like. And this may be well enough done too; provided it be out of decency, diſcretion, or good manners, rather than upon choice and inclination, and that he avoids it whenever he can, and paſſes the principal part of his time in better company.

It is indeed the fortune of many a good man to fall into bad company, and to be undone by it, and yet no ways guilty all the while of this iniquity of his companions. But can any man be excuſed that takes, and

even seeks all opportunities of frequenting the company of ill men, and shewing his delight in them, preferably to better? *Shew me the company*, says the adage, *and I will tell you the man.* And when a great person associates himself with fiddlers, buffoons, or tumblers, would not any man judge their souls to be of the same standard and alloy? Or when one sees a Lord take delight in a coach-box, would not a censorious person be tempted to think his real father had presided in one before him.

FAB. 62. A BOY AND FALSE ALARMS.

A SHEPHERD's boy had gotten a roguish trick of crying, A wolf! a wolf! when there was no such matter, and fooling the country-people with false alarms. He had been at this sport so many times in jest, that they would not believe him at last, when he was in earnest; and so the wolves broke in upon the flock, and worried the sheep without resistance.

MORAL.

This fable shews us the dangerous consequences of an improper and unseasonable fooling. The old moral observes, That a common liar shall not be believed, even when he speaks true.

REFLECTION.

It is not every man's talent to know when and how to cast out a pleasant word, with such a regard to modesty and respect, as not to transgress the true and fair allowances of wit, good nature, and good breeding. The skill and faculty of governing this freedom within the terms of sobriety and discretion, goes a great way in the character of an agreeable companion: For that which we call raillery, in this sense, is the very sauce of civil entertainment: And without some such tincture of urbanity, even in matters the most serious, the good humour falters, for want of refreshment and relief: But there is a medium yet betwixt all-fool and all-philosopher: I mean a proper and discreet mixture, that in some sort partakes of both, and renders wisdom itself so much the more grateful and effectual. The gravity, in short, of the one, is enlivened with the spirit and quickness of the other; and

and the gaiety of a diverting word ſerves as a vehicle to convey the force of the intent and meaning of it. The ſhepherd's boy, in ſhort, to come cloſer to the fable, went too far upon a topic he did not underſtand.

FAB. 63. AN EAGLE AND DAW.

An eagle made a ſtoop at a lamb, truſſed it, and took it away with her. A mimical daw, that ſaw this exploit, would needs try the ſame experiment upon a ram: But his claws were ſo ſhackled in the fleece with lugging to get him up, that the ſhepherd came in, and caught him, before he could clear himſelf; he clipt his wings, and carried him home to his children to play withal. They came gaping about him, and aſked their father what ſtrange bird that was? Why, ſays he, he fancied himſelf an eagle an hour ago; but now he is himſelf thoroughly convinced that he is but a ſilly daw.

MORAL.

It is a high degree of vanity and folly, for men to take more upon them than they are able to go through withal; ſince the end of all ſuch undertakings generally ſubjects them to mockery as well as diſappointment.

REFLECTION.

It is vain and dangerous to enter into competitions with our ſuperiors, in what kind ſoever, whether it be in arms or expence, or in arts and ſciences. It is impoſſible for any man, in fine, to take a true meaſure of another without an exact knowledge of himſelf. Nay, the attempt of any thing above our force, with vanity and preſumption, moſt certainly ends in a miſcarriage, which makes the pretender ridiculous. The endeavouring to out-do a great man in his own way, ſavours in ſome degree of ill manners, as it is upon the main a high point of indiſcretion. One man takes it for an affront to be out-witted, another to be out-fooled, as Nero could not endure to be out-fiddled; but, in ſhort, be the matter never ſo great, or never ſo trivial, it is the ſame caſe as to the envy of the competition.

FAB. 64. A DOG IN THE MANGER.

An envious cur was gotten into a manger, and there lay growling and snarling to keep out the cattle from their provender, chooſing rather to ſtarve his own carcaſe, than ſuffer the other beaſts to ſatisfy their hunger.

MORAL.

Envy pretends to no other happineſs than what it derives from the miſery of other people, and will rather eat nothing itſelf, than not ſtarve thoſe that would.

REFLECTION.

We have but too many men in the world of this dog's humour; who will rather puniſh themſelves, than not be troubleſome and vexatious to others. This diabolical envy is deteſtable, even in private perſons; but whenever the governing part of a nation comes to be tainted with it, there is nothing ſo ſacred that a corrupt, ſupercilious, ill-natured miniſter will not ſacrifice to this execrable paſſion. No worthy man ſhould eat, live, or breathe common air, if he could hinder it. It is his delight to blaſt all ſorts of honeſt men, and not only to leſſen their characters, and their ſervices, but to range them in the number of public enemies: And he had twenty times rather ſee the government ſink, than have it thought, that any hand but his own ſhould have a part in the honour of ſaving it. Now he that betrays his maſter for envy, will never fail of doing it for money; for the gratifying of this cankered malignity is but another way of ſelling him; only the ſpite is antecedent and ſubſervient to the corruption: But this court-envy is not altogether the envy of the dog in the fable; for there is a mixture of avarice and intereſt in the former, whereas the other is a ſpiteful malignity purely for miſchief-ſake. The dog will rather ſtarve himſelf than the cattle ſhall eat; but the envious courtier will be ſure to look to one, whoever elſe ſuffers.

FAB. 65. A SHEEP AND A CROW.

A crow ſat chattering upon the back of a ſheep: Well, Sirrah, ſays the ſheep, you durſt not have done this to a dog. Why, I know that, ſays the crow, as well as you can tell me; for I can be as quiet as any body with thoſe that are quarrelſome; and I can be as troubleſome

troubleſome as another too, when I meet with thoſe that will take it.

MORAL.

It is the nature and practice of mean and low ſpirits, to be inſolent towards thoſe that will bear it, and as ſlaviſh to others that are more than their match.

REFLECTION.

Inſolence and tyranny over inferiors and perſons in our power, is ſo unmanly a vice, that we may be always ſure, that ſuch a behaviour to ſuch perſons never fails to indicate a baſe mind; ſuch a mind as is capable of taking the very inſults from ſuperiors, where intereſt is concerned, that it offers to inferiors. This comfort, however, reſults from the whole, That though the great men threaten the little ones; yet kings threaten the great men; and, laſt of all, God threatens kings. In ſhort, it may be obſerved through the courſe of this world, That he who is a tyrant over one, is a ſlave to ſome other; and finds there are men who are as much too hard for him, as he is for thoſe he oppreſſes. And every one in *his own caſe* thinks himſelf hardly uſed, though he will not conſider it in *another's*.

FAB. 66. THE CREATURES PETITION JUPITER.

A GENERAL diſſatisfaction once reigned among ſeveral creatures, at their conditions particularly: The camel prayed Jupiter, That he might have horns allotted him, as well for ornament as defence, as bulls and ſtags had. The fox prayed for the fleetneſs of the hare; the hare for the ſubtlety of the fox; and the peacock prayed for the fine voice of the nightingale, ſuperadded to her own beautiful plumes. Jupiter told them, that ſince every creature had ſome advantage or other peculiar to itſelf, it would not ſtand with divine Juſtice, which had provided ſo well for every one in particular, to confer all upon any one. And becauſe the camel had ſhewed himſelf moſt uneaſy in his ſtate, the god not only refuſed him horns, but, for example-ſake, puniſhed him with the loſs of ears.

MORAL.

Every living creature has that ſhare of the bounties of heaven, which Providence knows to be beſt for it. We ought to be contented with our preſent condition, be it

what it will, and not repine at the dispensations of Providence.

REFLECTION.

We are never content with the bounties of Heaven. One would have a voice; the other gay clothes; and while every man would have all, we charge Providence with injustice for not giving to every man alike. Socrates was in the right in saying, That in case a man were to have the choice before him of all the ill things and all the good things in nature, he would come home again the same man that he went out, or perhaps worse.

Why should not the nightingale envy the peacock's train, as well as the peacock envy the nightingale's note? And why should not all the works of the creation expostulate at the same rate, and upon the same grounds? Why has not a man the wings of an eagle to carry him from danger, or to satisfy his curiosity what the world is doing? Why has he not the sagacity of a dog, the paw of a lion, the teeth of a leopard, the heels of a courser, and the like? And have not brute animals the same equity of complaint on the other hand, for want of the faculties and advantages, intellectual and moral, of mankind? So that here is a civil war that runs through all the parts of the universe, where nothing is pleased with its own lot, and no remedy at last, but by new moulding the world over again. This inordinate appetite has been the overthrow of many a kingdom, family, and commonwealth.

To ask impossibilities, in fine, is ridiculous; and to ask things unnatural, is impious: Such as we are, God has made us; our post and our station is appointed us, and the decree is not to be reversed.

FAB. 67. A COVETOUS LANDLORD.

A CERTAIN farmer had one choice apple-tree in his orchard, that he valued above all the rest, and made his landlord every year a present of the fruit of it. His landlord liked the apples so well, that after a while nothing would serve him but transplanting the tree into his own grounds. It withered presently upon the removal, and so there was an end of both fruit and tree together.

MORAL.

MORAL.

All covet all loſe, *ſays the proverb, which is a good moral to the fable.*

REFLECTION.

This is the true caſe of many a covetous man: Like the dog ſnapping at the ſhadow, he is not contented with the good he poſſeſſes, but endeavouring to get more, loſes what he had. The landlord's pride and avarice would not let him owe an obligation to his tenant, and ſo he robs his tenant, defrauds himſelf, and loſes the fruit and the tree for ever.

FAB. 68. A FOX AND A GOAT.

A FOX and a goat went down by conſent into a well to drink, and when they had quenched their thirſt, the goat was at a loſs how to get back again. I have a way for that, ſays Reynard; do but you raiſe yourſelf upon your hinder legs, with your fore-feet cloſe to the wall, and then ſtretch out your head; I can eaſily whip up to your horns, and ſo out of the well, and draw you after me. The goat puts himſelf in a poſture immediately, as he was directed, gives the fox a lift, and ſo out he ſprings: But Reynard, inſtead of helping him, leaves him with this barbarous ſcoff; If you had but half ſo much brain as beard, ſays he, you would have bethought yourſelf how to get up again before you went down.

MORAL.

A wiſe man will leave nothing to chance more than needs muſt; but will debate every thing pro *and* con, *before he comes to fix upon any reſolution.*

REFLECTION.

It is wiſdom to conſider the end of things before we embark, and to forecaſt conſequences. It is alſo to be expected, that men in diſtreſs will look to themſelves in in the firſt place, and leave their companions to ſhift as well as they can. When a knave and an honeſt man happen to be embarked together in the ſame common intereſt, the ſharper will be ſure, if ever it comes to a pinch, to ſhift for himſelf, and leave the other in the lurch. It is the way of the world for men to abandon their benefactors, and to make ſport with thoſe who raiſed them. No matter for the morality of the thing,

ſo

so long as it is the fashion; and he that advances himself upon the ruin of another, frequently gets the reputation of a man of art and address. The facility and the simplicity of the goat shews us what an honest man is to trust to who keeps a knave company. In fine, it behoves us to *look before we leap*; and, in case of the worst that can befal us, to secure an after-game.

FAB. 69. COCKS AND A PARTRIDGE.

A NOTED cocker bought a partridge, and turned it to feed among his fighting cocks. The cocks beat the partridge away from the meat, which she laid the more to heart, because it looked like an aversion to her purely as a stranger. But the partridge finding these very cocks afterwards tearing one another to pieces, comforted herself with this thought, that she had no reason to expect they should be kinder to her than they were to one another.

MORAL.

It is no wonder to find those people troublesome to strangers, who cannot agree among themselves.

REFLECTION.

There is no peace to be expected among those that are naturally fierce and quarrelsome. As far as possible, we are to avoid ill company; but where we are forced upon it, there is no remedy but patience. The cocks here did but according to their kind; and it is the same thing with wicked men too (as birds of the same feather) to be troublesome to other people as well as to one another.

FAB. 70. A BRAGGING TRAVELLER.

A VAIN fellow, who had been abroad in the world, would still be tiring peoples ears at his return with stories of his wonderful actions in his travels; and particularly he told of a leap he took at Rhodes, that nobody there could come within six feet of it. Now this, says he, I am able to prove by several witnesses upon the place. If this be true, says one of the company, there's no need of going to Rhodes for witness; do but you fancy this to be Rhodes, and then shew us the leap.

MORAL.

71. Scoffer Punish'd. P. 57.



72. Woman & Fat Hen. 58.



73. Man bit by a Dog. 59.



74. Thunny & Dolphin. P. 59.



75. Two Enemies at Sea. 60.



76. Astrologer Admonish'd. 61



77. Fowler & Blackbird. 62.



78. Mercury & Traveller. P. 62.



79. Boy & his Mother. P. 63.



80. Shepherd turn'd Merch. 63



MORAL.

Inſtant detection oftentimes attends the prating folly of a boaſter, and then he becomes the ſcoff and contempt of the company, inſtead of being what he would have been thought, the moſt conſiderable man in it.

REFLECTION.

This home put of one of the company was bringing the matter to a demonſtration: Vain boaſters ſhould be cautious of making pretenſions to what may be ſo eaſily brought to immediate proof. Travellers, they ſay, may lie by authority; and yet our traveller's privilege here was not ſufficient to protect him from being made a ſport to the company.

FAB. 71. A SCOFFER PUNISHED.

A PRESUMPTUOUS ſcoffer at things ſacred, took a journey to Delphi, on purpoſe to try if he could put a trick upon Apollo. He carried a ſparrow in his hand under his coat, and told the God, *I have ſomething in my hand*, ſays he: *Is it dead or living?* If the oracle ſhould ſay it was dead, he could ſhew it alive; if living, it was but ſqueezing it, and then it was dead. He that ſaw the iniquity of his heart, gave him this anſwer: It ſhall even be which of the two thou pleaſeſt: For it is in thy choice to have it either the one or the other, as to the bird, but it is not in thy power as to thyſelf; and immediately ſtruck the bold ſcoffer dead, for a warning to others.

MORAL.

Preſumption naturally leads people to infidelity, and that by inſenſible degrees to atheiſm: For when men have once caſt off a reverence for religion, they are come within one ſtep of laughing at it.

REFLECTION.

There is no playing faſt and looſe with God Almighty, who ſees the very thoughts of our hearts. This way of fooling in holy things, is the very boldeſt ſort of impiety that can be practiſed. He that pretends to doubt of an All-knowing power, has as much right to doubt of an All-mighty power too; and the bringing of one attribute in queſtion, opens the way to a diffidence of all the reſt. It would prevent a great deal of wickedneſs in the world, if men would but live and act in religious

religious matters so as to own and to recognize the force and awe of a deity in their *practices*, as well as in their *words*: but when they come to querying and riddling upon it, with an *If* it be so and so, the scandal of the supposition is not to be borne; for such a way of seeming to affirm a thing, is but one remove from a flat denial of it. Such was the scoffer's question here to the oracle, which implies both the doubt of a Divine Omniscience, and a curiosity to discover the truth of the matter, with a banter at the end of it; and so makes a consummated wickedness; which we think completes the fable, in making it end with so deserved a punishment.

FAB. 72. A WOMAN AND A FAT HEN.

A good woman who had a hen that laid her every day an egg, fancied that, upon a larger allowance of corn, this hen might be brought to lay twice a day. She tried the experiment; but the hen grew fat upon it, and quite gave over laying.

MORAL.

We should set bounds to our desires, and content ourselves when we are well, for fear of losing what we have.

REFLECTION.

This fable is of the same nature with that of the covetous landlord, *Fab.* 67, and affords us a figure of the folly and the mischief of vain desires, and an immoderate love of riches. Covetousness is enough to make the master of the world as poor as he that has just nothing. It is a madness for one that has enough already, to hazard all for the getting of more. There is a just medium between eating too much and too little; and this dame had undoubtedly hit upon it, when the hen brought her every day an egg. But when she came to enlarge the hen's allowance for her own profit, upon an opinion that more corn would produce more eggs, her avarice misled her into a disappointment, which was both a judgment upon the sin, in the loss of what she had before, and an error in the very point of management and good housewifery; for repletion obstructs the most necessary offices of nature, and that as well in human creatures as poultry: And this may serve as another lesson to parents, and those to whom the

the care of children is intrusted, how they suffer them to overcharge their stomachs, and humour their appetites; since such a habit will make them unfit for every good purpose or improvement, and fill them with diseases into the bargain.

FAB. 73. A MAN BIT BY A DOG.

One bitten by a dog was advised, as the best remedy in the world, to dip a piece of bread in the blood of the wound, and give it the dog to eat. Mighty good advice truly, says the man! and so you have a mind to draw all the dogs in town upon me! for that will certainly be the case, when they shall find themselves rewarded instead of punished.

MORAL.

Our good-nature should always be managed with prudence. We may forgive an injury; but we should not encourage the person who has injured us to repeat the offence.

REFLECTION.

Under the rule and correction of this allegory, we may reckon calumny, slander, and detraction in any form or figure whatsoever, and all manner of affronts and indignities upon our good names, or our persons. There may be place in all these cases for a generous charity to forgive offences, even of the highest ingratitude and malice; but it is not advisable to reward, where men have the tenderness not to punish. This way of proceeding is dangerous in all the affairs, public as well as private, of human life; for it is a temptation to villainy, when a man fares the better for evil-doing. Ill-nature, in fine, is not to be cured with a sop; but on the contrary, quarrelsome men, as well as quarrelsome curs, are often the worse for gentle usage.

FAB. 74. A THUNNY AND A DOLPHIN.

A thunny was chased by a dolphin, which being just ready to seize him, the thunny struck before he was aware, and the dolphin in the eagerness of his pursuit, ran himself a-ground with him. They were both lost; but the thunny kept his eye still upon the dolphin; and observing him when he was just at the last gasp, Well, says he, the thought of death is now easy

eaſy to me, ſo long as I ſee my enemy go for company.

MORAL.

An innocent man may be indulged ſome ſatisfaction, when he ſees the rapacious enemy, who brought deſtruction upon him, involved in the ſame calamity.

REFLECTION.

Sir Roger L'Eſtrange has made this and the following fable to have the ſame import, and has put them both under one moral and reflection, to ſhew the wickedneſs of a revengeful diſpoſition: But to us there ſeems a wide difference in the two fables; and therefore we think ourſelves juſtified, in taking upon us to differ from that celebrated writer, and to make two diſtinct applications to them. Here is the harmleſs thunny, in ſtriving to ſave his life from the jaws of a devouring enemy, driven on ſhore and loſt; and, as we have obſerved in the moral, it was a natural and pardonable ſatisfaction that he took in ſeeing his cruel and mercileſs enemy ſharing the ſame fate which he had brought upon him. The doctrine from hence may be, That Divine vengeance oftentimes involves a wicked man in the ſame ruin which he had deſigned for another, and he meets his puniſhment in the very higheſt and moſt ſucceſsful act of his malice.

FAB. 75. TWO ENEMIES AT SEA.

TWO enemies were at ſea in the ſame veſſel, the one at the ſhip's head, the other at the ſtern. It blew a dreadful ſtorm; and when the veſſel was juſt ready to be ſwallowed up, one of them aſked the maſter, which part of the ſhip would be firſt under water? He told him the other end would ſink firſt. Why then, ſays he, I ſhall have the comfort of ſeeing my enemy go before me.

MORAL.

It is a wretched ſatisfaction that a revengeful man takes, when he can loſe his own life, provided that his enemy may not ſurvive him.

REFLECTION.

Revenge is a truly diabolical diſpoſition, and ſtops at nothing that is violent and wicked. It divides the deareſt friends, embroils governments, and tears families

lies to pieces. The histories of all ages are full of the tragical outrages that have been executed by this infernal passion; which is even capable of hardening people into a brutal contempt of death (as in the fable above) where they may but see their enemies fall for company.

FAB. 76. THE ASTROLOGER ADMONISHED.

A CERTAIN star-gazer had the fortune, in the very height of his celestial observations, to stumble into a very deep ditch; and while he was scrabbling to get out, friend, says a sober fellow passing by, make a right use of your present misfortunes; and, for the future, pray let the stars go on quietly in their courses, and do you look a little better to the ditches; for is it not strange, that you should tell other people their fortune, and know nothing of your own?

MORAL.

This fable is a just rebuke to such as neglect their own concerns to pry into those of other people.

REFLECTION.

The fable also serves, taken according to the letter of it, to expose the impudent pretensions of fortune-tellers, gypsies, wizards, and such like, who so much impose on the credulity of the weak and ignorant, as well in town as country, especially in the latter. This humour, as Sir Roger L'Estrange well observes, let it look never so little and silly (as it passes many times only for frolic and banter) is yet one of the most pernicious snares in human life, when it comes once to gain credit; especially among women and children, where the imagination is strong in the one, and disposition is as pliant as wax for any impression in the other. Wherefore, of all things in this world, care is to be taken, that they get not a hankering after these wretched jugglers. To say nothing of the fooleries of fortune-books, and a hundred other vulgar ways of inquiry into the event of amours, marriages, life and death, travel, play, or the like; which is all but a tincture of the same capital infirmity. If these pretenders were not better supported by the simplicity and superstition of inquisitive fools, than they are by any congruity of premises and conclusion, or by the ordinary way of tracing causes from their effects, the trade would not find them bread;

for there is no proportion at all betwixt the means and the end.

FAB. 77. A FOWLER AND BLACK-BIRD.

A BLACK-BIRD aſked a fowler, who was baiting his net, what he was doing? Why, ſays he, I am laying the foundations of a city; and ſo the bird-man drew out of ſight. The black-bird, miſtruſting nothing, flew preſently to the bait in the net, and was taken; and as the man came running to lay hold of him, Friend, ſays the poor black-bird, if this be your way of building you will have but few inhabitants.

MORAL.

Inquiſitive people ſometimes pay dear for their impertinent folly.

REFLECTION.

The black-bird here met with a deſerved fate. He could not reſt contented with enjoying his own liberty, but muſt pry into the concerns of others, and as ſoon as the bird-man was gone, muſt needs deſcend from his ſanctuary, to devour the bait to which he had no right, and was deſervedly therefore caught in the gin. On the other hand, the fowler ſets forth the arts and ſtratagems of a deſigning man, who never wants a pretence to draw unwary and inquiſitive fools into his net, and ſuits his bait to the weakneſs of the intended prey. And indeed it will be found, on due obſervation, that the greateſt part of mankind are as eaſily taken in and ſeduced as the ſilleſt birds, while they permit the eagerneſs of their appetites to ſuſpend the exerciſe of their reaſon. And if a ſuitable bait be held out, as a luxurious treat to an epicure, a fine woman to a ſenſualiſt, or the appearance of gain to a miſer, they will each reſpectively ſnap at the bait as eagerly as a bird or a fiſh, would do at a worm, a gudgeon, or a grain of corn.

FAB. 78. MERCURY AND A TRAVELLER.

A TRAVELLER juſt entering upon a long journey, made a promiſe to Mercury, that he would dedicate to his divinity half what he ſhould find. Somebody had loſt a bag of dates and almonds, it ſeems, and it was his fortune to find it. He fell to work upon them imme-

immediately, and when he had eaten up the kernels, and all that was good of them, he laid the ſtones and the ſhells upon an altar, and deſired Mercury to take notice, that he had performed his vow: For, ſays he, here are the outſides of the one, and the inſides of the other, and there is the moiety I promiſed.

MORAL.

Some men talk as if they believed in God, but they live as if they thought there were none; but their very prayers are mockeries, and their vows and promiſes are no more than words of courſe, *which if they ever intended to make good, they ſeldom have the heart to do it, when it comes to the point.*

REFLECTION.

More or leſs we are all jugglers in ſecret betwixt Heaven and our own ſouls; only we ſeek to meditate and cover abuſes under the maſk and pretence of conſcience and religion; and make God Almighty privy to a thouſand falſe and cozening contrivances, which we keep as the greateſt privacies in the world from the knowledge of our neighbours. Nay, when we are moſt in earneſt, our vows and promiſes are more than half broken in the very making them: And if we can but ſecure ourſelves a retreat by ſome plauſible evaſion, diſtinction, or mental reſervation, it ſerves our purpoſe as well as if it were a cauſuiſtical reſolution. In one word, we all too much find the moral of Mercury and the traveller in the very ſecrets of our hearts, betwixt Heaven and our own ſouls.

FAB. 79. A BOY AND HIS MOTHER.

A SCHOOL-BOY ſtole a book, and brought it to his mother; who was ſo far from correcting him for it, that ſhe rather encouraged him. As he grew bigger, he increaſed in villainy; till he came at laſt to be taken in a great theft, and was brought to juſtice for it. His mother went lamenting along with him to the place of execution, where he got leave of the officers to have a word or two in private with her. He put his mouth to her ear, and under pretext of a whiſper, bit it clear off. This unnatural villainy turned every body's heart againſt him more than before: Well, good people, ſays the *boy*, here you ſee me an example, both upon the

matter of ſhame and puniſhment; and it is this mother of mine that has brought me to it; for if ſhe had but whipt me ſoundly for the book I ſtole when I was a boy, I ſhould never have come to the gallows for theft now when I am a man.

MORAL.

We are either made or marred in our education; and governments, as well as private families, are concerned in the conſequences of it.

REFLECTION.

Wicked diſpoſitions ſhould be checked in time; for when they come once to habits, they grow incurable. More people go to the gibbet for want of early inſtruction, diſcipline, and correction, than upon any incurable pravity of nature; and it is mightily the fault of parents, guardians, tutors, and governors, that ſo many men miſcarry. They ſuffer them at firſt to run a-head, and when perverſe inclinations are advanced once into habits, there is no dealing with them.

FAB. 80. A SHEPHERD TURNED MERCHANT.

A SHEPHERD feeding his flock by the ſea-ſide on a very fine day, the ſmoothneſs of the water tempted him to leave his ſhepherd's buſineſs, and ſet up for a merchant. So in all haſte he puts off his ſtock, buys a bargain of figs, gets his freight aboard, and goes away preſently to ſea. But foul weather happening, the mariners were fain to caſt their whole lading overboard, to ſave themſelves and the veſſel. Upon this miſcarriage, our new merchant-adventurer betook himſelf to his old trade again; and it happened one day, as he was tending his ſheep upon the very ſame coaſt, to be juſt ſuch a flattering tempting ſea as that which betrayed him before: *Yes, yes,* ſaid he, *who is fool then? You would have ſome more figs, with a vengeance, would ye?*

MORAL.

Men may be happy in all eſtates, if they will but ſuit their minds to their condition. But if they will be launching into buſineſs they do not underſtand, they have nothing left them to truſt to when they are once bewildered, but the hope of ſome kind Providence to put them in the right way home again.

REFLECTION.

Fab. 81. Man of Quality & Lion P. 65



82. Fox that lost his Tail. 66.



83. Fox & Bramble. P. 67.



84. Fox & Huntsman. 67.



85. Man & Wooden God. 68.



86. Father & his Children. 69.



87. Fisherman & his Pipe. 70.



88. Fisherman's good Luck. 70.



89. Death & Old Man. 71.



90. Ape elected King. 71.



REFLECTION.

Affliction makes people honeſt and wiſe. Every man living has his weak ſide; and no mortal was ever yet ſo much at eaſe, but his ſhoe wrung him ſomewhere or other, or he fancied ſo at leaſt. Our ſhepherd's caſe here, in ſhort, is every man's caſe, who quits a moral certainty for an uncertainty, and leaps from the honeſt buſineſs he was brought up to, into a trade he has no ſkill in.

FAB. 81. A MAN OF QUALITY AND A LION.

A PERSON of quality dreamed one night, that he ſaw a lion kill his only ſon, who was, it ſeems, a great lover of the chace. This fancy ran in the father's head to that degree, that he built his ſon a houſe of pleaſure, on purpoſe to keep him out of harm's way; and ſpared neither art nor coſt to make a delicious retreat; which however, in the main, the young man conſidered as no other than a priſon, and his father, who confined him to it, as his keeper. Among the paintings which adorned this little palace, was the picture of a lion, which he viewed one day, and being incenſed to think that he ſhould be kept a kind of priſoner for the ſake of a ſilly dream of ſuch a beaſt, he made a blow at the picture; but ſtriking his fiſt upon the point of a nail in the wall, his hand cancerated, he fell into a fever, and ſoon after died of it: So that all the father's precaution could not ſecure the ſon from the fatality of dying by a lion.

MORAL.

Superſtitious minds are often puniſhed in the way they moſt dread. And the very means which we take to avoid an apprehended evil, when we rely too much on our own ſtrength or prudence, without truſting in Providence, are often made uſe of to bring it upon us.

REFLECTION.

It is to no purpoſe to think of preventing or diverting fatalities, eſpecially where the event looks like the puniſhment of a ſuperſtition; as it fares with thoſe who govern their lives by forebodings and dreams, or the ſigns of ill luck, as we uſe to ſay; they are ſtill anxious and uneaſy. Hiſtory is full of examples to illuſtrate the doctrine of this fable. The father was to blame for

laying ſo much ſtreſs upon a fooliſh dream, and the ſon was little leſs to blame for being ſo much tranſported at the impreſſion of that fancy of the father: But they were both juſtly puniſhed however, the one for his ſuperſtition, and the other for his paſſion.

FAB. 82. A FOX THAT HAD LOST HIS TAIL.

A FOX taken in a trap was glad to compound for his neck, by leaving his tail behind him. It was ſo uncouth a ſight for a fox to appear without a tail, that the very thought of it made him weary of his life: But however, for the better countenance of the ſcandal, he got the *maſter and wardens of the foxes company* to call a *court of aſſiſtants*, where he himſelf appeared, and made a learned diſcourſe upon the trouble, the uſeleſſneſs, and the indecency of foxes wearing tails. He had no ſooner ſaid out his ſay, but up riſes a cunning ſnap, then at the board, who deſired to be informed, whether the worthy member that moved againſt the wearing of tails, gave his advice for the advantage of thoſe that *had tails*, or to palliate the deformity and diſgrace of thoſe that *had none?*

MORAL.

It is the way of the world to give other people counſel for by-ends. But yet it is a hard matter to over-rule a multitude to their own pain and loſs.

REFLECTION.

We may improve a doctrine from this, that every man has his weak ſide, either by miſchance or by nature; and that he makes it his buſineſs to cover it too the beſt he can. In caſe of the worſt, it is ſome ſort of eaſe to have company in misfortune. It puts a man out of countenance to be in faſhion by himſelf, and therefore the fox acted cunningly to try if he could bring his fellow-foxes to put themſelves into this mode. When we have carried a point as far as it will go, and can make no more of it, it is a ſtroke of art and philoſophy, to look as if we did not ſo much as wiſh for a thing that is not to be had. Every man's preſent condition has ſomewhat to be ſaid for it: If it be uneaſy, the ſkill will be, either how to *mend* it, or how to *bear* it; but then there muſt be no claſhing with the methods, the decrees, and the laws of Nature. A man

that

that has forfeited his honour and his conſcience, ſeems to be much in the condition of the fox here that had loſt his tail; and oftentimes takes as much pains too, to perſuade all his companions to follow his faſhion, and be as corrupt as himſelf, that he may bring the reſt of the world down to his own ſtandard.

FAB. 83. A FOX AND A BRAMBLE.

A FOX cloſe purſued, took to a hedge; the buſhes gave way, and in catching hold of a bramble to break his fall, the prickles ran into his feet; upon this he laid himſelf down, and fell to licking his paws, with bitter exclamations againſt the bramble. Good words, Reynard, ſays the bramble; one would have thought, that you, whoſe heart is bent upon miſchief, had known better things than to lay hold on that for relief, which catches at every thing elſe for miſchief.

MORAL.

That man is hard put to it, who firſt brings himſelf into a diſtreſs, and then is forced to fly to his enemy for relief.

REFLECTION.

They who make themſelves the common enemies of mankind, by breaking all the meaſures of good faith, truth, and peace, and by lying in wait for innocent blood, let them turn their heads which way they will, they ſhall be ſure of an enemy in the face of them: Nay, they meet with their puniſhment, where they look for ſafety; and which way ſoever they go, Divine Juſtice either meets them or purſues them. The fox's charging his misfortune here upon the bramble, is the very caſe and practice of wicked men, who ſnarl at the inſtrument, without ſo much as thinking of the Providence.

FAB. 84. A FOX AND HUNTSMEN.

A FOX that was hard purſued, begged of a countryman to help him to ſome hiding-place. The man directed him to his cottage, and thither he went. The huntſmen were preſently at his heels, and aſked the cottager, if he did not ſee a fox that way? No, truly, ſays he, I ſaw none; but pointed at the ſame time with his finger to the place where he lay. The huntſmen

huntſment did not take the hint, it ſeems; but the fox ſpied him, however, through a peeping-hole he had found out: So the hunters went their way, and then out ſteals the fox, and departs without one word ſpeaking. Why, how now, ſays the man, have not you the manners to thank me before you go? Yes, yes, ſays the fox, if you had been as honeſt of your fingers as you were of your tongue, I ſhould not have gone without acknowledging the favour.

MORAL.

A man may tell a lie by ſigns, as well as in words at length; and his conſcience in this caſe is as anſwerable for his fingers as for his tongue.

REFLECTION.

Here is a caſe of honour and of conſcience both in one, upon the matter of hoſpitality and of truſt. The laws of hoſpitality are ſacred on the one ſide, and ſo are the duties we owe to our country on the other. If we conſider the truſt, faith muſt not be broken; if the common enemy, his counſel is not to be kept. The woodman did as good as tacitly promiſe the fox a ſanctuary; but not being *ſui juris*, he promiſed more than he could warrantly perform; for a ſubſequent promiſe to conceal the fox could not diſcharge him of a prior obligation to deſtroy him, as a beaſt of prey. It is true, it would have been more generous to have done it at firſt, and while he had as yet no colour of any tie of honour upon him to preſerve him. The fox begged for protection, which he had no reaſon to expect. But let that be as it will, there is no excuſe for the woodman's double-dealing: For a man ſhould not promiſe that which he does not intend to perform.

FAB. 85. A MAN AND A WOODEN GOD.

A MAN who had a great veneration for an image he had in his houſe, found, that the more he prayed to it to proſper him in the world, the more he went down the wind ſtill. This put him into ſuch a rage that at laſt he daſhed the head of it to pieces againſt the wall, and out comes a conſiderable quantity of gold. Why this it is, ſays he, to adore a perverſe and inſenſible deity, that will do more for blows than worſhip.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Moſt people accommodate their religion to their profit, and reckon that to be the beſt church which there is moſt to be got by.

REFLECTION.

All people who worſhip for fear, profit, or ſome other by-end, fall more or leſs within the intendment of this emblem. It is a kind of conditional devotion for men to be no longer religious than they can ſave or get by it. The whole ſum of the moral is, in ſhort, compriſed in the old ſaying, *He who ſerves God for money, will ſerve the devil for better wages.*

FAB. 86. A FATHER AND HIS CHILDREN.

A COUNTYMAN who had lived handſomely in the world upon his honeſt labour and induſtry, was deſirous his ſons ſhould do ſo after him; and being now upon his death-bed, My dear children, ſays he, I reckon myſelf bound to tell you before I depart, that there is a conſiderable treaſure hid in my vineyard; wherefore pray be ſure to dig, and ſearch narrowly for it, when I am gone. The father dies, and the ſons fall immediately to work upon the vineyard. They turned it up over and over, and not one penny of money to be found there; but the profit of the next vintage expounded the riddle.

MORAL.

Good counſel is the beſt legacy a father can leave to a child; and it is ſtill the better, when it is ſo wrapt up, as to beget a curioſity as well as an inclination to follow it.

REFLECTION.

There is no wealth like that which comes by the bleſſing of God upon honeſt labour and warrantable induſtry. Here is an incitement to an induſtrious courſe of life, by a conſideration of the profit, the innocence, and the virtue of ſuch an application. There is one great comfort in hand, beſide the hope and aſſurance of more to come. It was a touch of art in the father to cover his meaning in ſuch a manner, as to create a curioſity and an earneſt deſire in his ſons to find it out. And it was a treble advantage to them beſides; for there was health in the exerciſe, profit in the diſcovery.

covery, and the comfort of a good conſcience in diſcharging the duty of a filial obedience.

FAB. 87. A FISHERMAN AND HIS PIPE.

A FISHERMAN, who underſtood piping better than netting, ſat himſelf down upon the ſide of a river and touched his flute; but not a fiſh came near him. Upon this he laid down his pipe, and caſt his net, which brought him a very great draught. The fiſh fell a friſking in the net; and the fiſherman obſerving it, What ſots are theſe, ſays he, that would not dance when I played to them, and will be dancing now without muſic?

MORAL,

A man who uſes not the proper and requiſite means to attain his end, can never expect ſucceſs.

REFLECTION.

There is a proper time and ſeaſon for every thing; and nothing can be more ridiculous than the doing of things without a due regard to the circumſtances of perſons, proportion, time, and place.

FAB. 88. A FISHERMAN'S GOOD LUCK.

A FISHERMAN had been a long while at work without catching any thing, and at laſt began to think of taking up his tackle, and going; but in that very inſtant a great fiſh leapt into the boat, and ended the day to his great advantage.

MORAL.

Patience, conſtancy, and perſeverance, in an honeſt cauſe and duty, can never fail of a happy end, one way or other.

REFLECTION.

That which we commonly call good fortune, is properly Providence; and when matters ſucceed better with us by accident, than we could pretend to by ſkill, we ought to aſcribe it to the Divine Goodneſs, as a bleſſing upon induſtry. It is every man's duty to labour in his calling, and not to deſpond for any miſcarriages or diſappointments that were not in his own power to prevent. Faith, hope, and patience overcome all things; and virtue can never fail of a reward in the concluſion.

FAB. 89.

FAB. 89. DEATH AND AN OLD MAN.

AN old man had travelled a great way under a huge burden of ſticks, and found himſelf ſo weary at laſt, that he caſt it down, and called upon death to deliver him from a miſerable life. Death came preſently at his call, and aſked him his buſineſs. Pray, good Sir, ſays he, affrighted to find him ſo ready, do me but the favour to help me up with my burden again.

MORAL.

Human nature, however miſerable in this life, had rather ſuffer than die. If death were always ſo ready to attend a diſappointed mind when it called, men would take care to make it the laſt thing they wiſhed for.

REFLECTION.

We are apt to pick quarrels with the world for every little foolery. Every trivial croſs makes us ſay we are weary of the world; but our tongues run quite to another tune, when we come once to parting with it in earneſt. Then we are willing to endure any thing in this world, if we can but keep life and ſoul together. When it comes to that once, it is not, Help me *off* with my burden, but, Help me *up* with it. To this purpoſe, the dying perſon ſpoke naturally enough, though not over picuſly, who being comforted that he was going now to enjoy the fruits of his good life and preaching, to a place of joy and glory inexpreſſible, where all his cares and his troubles would be at an end; It is very true, ſays he, Heaven is a bleſſed place to be ſure; but were I to have my prayers heard, I would ſay, for a little longer at leaſt, *Old* England *for me.*

FAB. 90. AN APE ELECTED KING.

ON the death of a lion, a contention aroſe among the beaſts who ſhould be king in his place. Several competitors offered; but at laſt an ape, delighting the crowd with his grimaces and gambols, was choſen. This diſguſting the fox, he pretends to have found a treaſure, which he ſaid belonged only to his majeſty, and deſired him to go take poſſeſſion of it. The fox ſhews him a bait laid in a ditch for the treaſure, which the ape going to ſeize, the trap ſprings, and catches him

him by the fingers. *Ah thou perfidious wretch!* cries the ape. Or, thou ſimple prince, rather! replies the fox: You a governor of others, with a vengeance, that have not wit enough to look to your own fingers!

MORAL.

When apes are in power, foxes will never be wanting to play upon them.

REFLECTION.

Men ſhould not take a charge upon them, which they are not fit for. Singing, dancing, and ſhewing of tricks, are not qualifications for a governor. This fable ſhews not only the envy and malignity of the fox, but the imprudence of electors in the choice of miniſters, repreſentatives, or officers that are not made for buſineſs.

This fable alſo ſets forth the unhappineſs of elective kingdoms, where canvaſſing and faction have commonly too great a hand in the election. Nor is there any wonder to ſee drolls and tumblers advanced to charges of honour and profit, where ignorance and popularity ſway the choice. In fine, a character of honour upon the ſhoulders of a man who has neither a ſoul anſwerable to it, nor a true ſenſe of the dignity, is but a mark ſet up for every common fool to ſhoot his bolt at, and every knave to play upon.

FAB. 91. A BOASTING MULE.

A FAVOURITE mule, high-fed, and in the pride of fleſh and mettle, would ſtill be bragging of his family and his anceſtors. My father, ſays he, was a noble courſer; and, though I ſay it that ſhould not ſay it, I myſelf take after him. He had no ſooner ſpoken the words, but his father, an old aſs that ſtood by, fell a braying; which minded him of his original, and the whole field laughed him to ſcorn, when they found him to be the ſon of an aſs.

MORAL.

A bragging fool, who is raiſed out of a dunghill, and ſets himſelf up for a man of quality, is aſhamed of nothing ſo much as of his own father and poor relations.

REFLECTION.

This touches the caſe of thoſe mean upſtarts, who when they come once to be preferred, forget their deſcent, and have not the wit to conſider how ſoon fortune

Fab. 91. A Boasting Mule. P. 72.



92. Dog & Wolf. 73.



93. Lion in Love. P. 74.



94. Lioness & Fox. 75.



95. Two Cocks Fighting. 75.



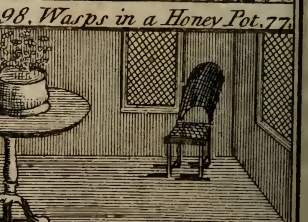
96. Fawn & Stag. P. 76.



97. Jupiter & Bee. 77.



98. Wasps in a Honey Pot. 77.



99. Young Man & Swallow. 78.



100. Mercury & Carpenter. 79.



fortune may ſet them down again where ſhe took them up; but yet at laſt, when they come to be minded of their original, it makes many a proud fool ſenſible of a ſcandalous extraction, that has no ſhame at all for a ſcandalous life.

Nothing daſhed the confidence of the mule like the braying of the aſs in the very interim while he was dilating upon his genealogy. As who ſhould ſay, *Remember your father, ſirrah!* We have, in fine, a world of boaſting mules among us, that do not care for being minded of their braying fathers: But it is often the fate of theſe vain-glorious fops to be thus met withal; and your counterfeit men of honour ſeldom come off better: Wherefore let every man look well about him, before he boaſts of his pedigree, to make ſure that there be not an aſs in the family.

FAB. 92. A DOG AND A WOLF.

A WOLF took dog napping at his maſter's door, and when he was juſt about to worry him, Alas! ſays he, I am as lean at preſent as carrion; but we are to have a wedding at our houſe within theſe two or three days, that will plump me up with good cheer; and when I am in a little better caſe, I will throw myſelf in the very mouth of you. The wolf took his word, and let him go; but paſſing ſome few days after by the ſame houſe again, he eſpied the dog in the hall, and bade him remember his promiſe. Hark ye, my friend, ſays the dog, whenever you catch me aſleep again on the wrong ſide of the door, never trouble your head to wait for a wedding.

MORAL.

It is good to provide againſt all chances, both ſleeping and waking; a man cannot be too circumſpect, provided his condition do not make him too ſolicitous for his peace of mind.

REFLECTION.

Paſt dangers make us wiſer for the future: As the dog, after he had been ſnapt at the door, had the wit to lie in the hall; which tells us, that a wiſe body is not to be caught twice by the ſame ſnare and trick. His promiſe to the wolf was a kind of a dog-caſe of conſcience, and the wolf played the fool in taking his word

for that which he had no reaſon to expect he would perform.

FAB. 93. A LION IN LOVE.

A LION was in love with a country laſs, and deſired her father's conſent to have her in marriage. The father, afraid of diſguſting ſo formidable a beaſt, pretended to conſent, provided he would have his teeth drawn, and his nails pared; for the fooliſh girl, he ſaid, was terribly afraid of thoſe things. The lion undergoes the operation, and then challenges the father upon his promiſe. The countryman ſeeing the lion diſarmed, plucked up a good heart, and with a ſwinging cudgel ſo ordered the matter that he broke off the match.

MORAL.

An extravagant love conſults neither life, fortune, nor reputation; but ſacrifices all that can be dear to a man of ſenſe and honour, to the tranſports of an inconſiderate paſſion.

REFLECTION.

This fable, as Sir Roger L'Eſtrange obſerves, will look well enough in the moral, how fantaſtical ſoever it may appear at firſt bluſh in the lines and traces of it. Here, ſays he, is a beaſt in love with a virgin; which is but a reverſe of the prepoſterous paſſions we meet with frequently in the world, when reaſonable creatures of both ſexes fall in love with thoſe that in the alluſion may (almoſt without a figure) paſs for beaſts. There is nothing ſo fierce, or ſo ſavage, but love will ſoften it; nothing ſo generous, but it will debaſe it; nothing ſo ſharp-ſighted in other matters, but it throws a miſt before the eyes of it; and, to ſum up all in a little, where this paſſion domineers, neither honour nor virtue is able to ſtand before it. The lion's parting with his teeth and his claws, in a compliment to his new miſtreſs, is no more than what we ſee every day exemplified in the caſe of making over eſtates, and extorting jointures, with the malice prepenſe all this while of holding their noſes to the grindſtone, and poſſibly, with the girl's father here, of jilting them at laſt.

FAB. 94.

FAB. 94. A LIONESS AND A FOX.

A FOX caſt it in the teeth of a lioneſs, that ſhe brought forth but one whelp at a time. Very true, ſays the other; but then that one is a lion.

MORAL.

Things ought not to be valued for their number, but their excellency.

REFLECTION.

Take the world to pieces, and there are a thouſand ſots to one philoſopher; and as many ſwarms of flies to one eagle. One hero, or one truly great genius, is hardly produced in an age. Look into families who have the largeſt numbers of children, and ſee how few the worthy are, compared to the unworthy. Lions do not come into the world in litters.

FAB. 95. TWO COCKS FIGHTING.

TWO cocks fought a duel for the maſtery of a dunghill. He that was worſted ſlunk away, and hid himſelf in a corner; the other takes his flight up to the top of the houſe, and there, with crowing and clapping of his wings, makes proclamation of his victory. An eagle made a ſtoop at him in the middle of his exultation, and carried him away; and the vanquiſhed cock got the ſole poſſeſſion both of miſtreſſes and dunghill.

MORAL.

A wiſe and generous enemy will make a moderate uſe of a victory; for fortune is variable.

REFLECTION.

This combat of two cocks for a dunghill may be applied to the competition of the greateſt princes for empire and dominion. For what is the world more than a maſs of dirt or a dunghill, on the one hand, as to the ſubject of the quarrel? And there is the ſame thirſt of blood too, betwixt the combatants, on the other. We have again, the various chance of war exhibited on both ſides; for it is with *kings*, as with the *cocks*. He that is victor this moment may be a captive the next: And this volubility of human affairs, what is it but either the ſport or the judgment of Providence, in the puniſhment of arrogance and oppreſſion? We are given finally to underſtand, that as the levity of

fortune leaves us nothing to truſt to, or preſume upon, ſo at the ſame time there is nothing to deſpair of. The conquering cock was cut off in the very ſong of his triumph; and the conquered left maſter of the whole ſubject of debate.

FAB. 96. A FAWN AND A STAG.

A FAWN was reaſoning the matter with a ſtag, why he ſhould run away from the dogs ſtill; for, ſays he, you are bigger and ſtronger than they, and you are alſo better armed; I cannot therefore imagine what ſhould make you ſo fearful of a company of pitiful curs. Nay, ſays the ſtag, it is all true that you ſay, and it is no more than I ſay to myſelf many times; and yet, whatever the matter is, let me take up what reſolution I pleaſe, when I hear the hounds once, I cannot but betake myſelf to my heels.

MORAL.

It is one thing to know what we ought to do, and another to execute it: He that is naturally a coward, is not to be made valiant by counſel

REFLECTION.

Natural infirmities, as men generally manage the matter, are well nigh inſuperable: Men may be conſcious of the ſcandal of a natural weakneſs, and may make a ſhift perhaps to reaſon themſelves now-and-then into a kind of temporary reſolution, which, however, they have not the power to go through with. We find it to be much the ſame caſe in the government of our affections and appetites, that it is in theſe bodily frailties of temperament and complexion. Providence has armed us with powers and faculties, ſufficient for the confounding all the enemies both of fleſh and ſpirit which we have to encounter. We have good and evil before us; and we know, that it is at our choice to *take*, or to *refuſe*; but when we come to deliberate, we too generally play booty againſt ourſelves; and while our judgement and our conſciences direct us one way, our corruptions hurry us another. The ſtag, in fine, is a thorough emblem of the ſtate and infirmity of mankind. We are both of us armed and provided, either for the combat with our enemies, or for flight from them. We foreſee the conſequence of a temptation or a danger;

danger; we ponder upon it, and now-and-then by fits determine to out-brave and break through it; but we too often ſhrink upon the trial; we too frequently betake ourſelves, as it were, from our heads to our heels; that is to ſay, from reaſon to fleſh and blood; from our ſtrength to our weakneſſes; and both the ſtag and we not ſeldom ſuffer under one common fate. But after all, this is ſaying what *is*, not what *ought to be*, the caſe. For it is a laudable taſk to attempt to overcome a natural propenſion or habit to any ſort of evil; and the greater the difficulty, the more glorious the conqueſt. The attempt is worthy of a man and a Chriſtian; and the Divine Grace ſeldom fails to aſſiſt and ſupport a *ſincere* and *perſevering* mind in ſo noble a conflict.

FAB. 97. JUPITER AND A BEE.

A BEE made Jupiter a preſent of ſome honey, which was ſo kindly taken, that he bade her aſk what ſhe would, in reaſon, and it ſhould be granted to her. The bee deſired, that wherever ſhe ſhould ſet her ſting, it might be mortal. Jupiter was loth to leave mankind at the mercy of a little ſpiteful inſect, and was ſo far from giving her *more* power, that he bade her have a care how ſhe uſed that ſhe *had*; for what perſon ſoever ſhe attacked, if ſhe left her ſting behind her, ſhe ſhould not long ſurvive it.

MORAL.

Spiteful prayers generally prove curſes to thoſe who make them; and the miſchief they intend to others, uſually falls upon their own heads.

REFLECTION.

Cruelty and revenge are directly contrary to the very nature of the Divine Goodneſs; and ſuch as pray for a power to exerciſe them, muſt expect a puniſhment from Heaven, rather than a compliance with their prayers. We ought to be very careful what we pray for, leſt, inſtead of a bleſſing, we bring a curſe upon ourſelves.

FAB. 98. WASPS IN A HONEY-POT.

A WHOLE ſwarm of waſps got into a honey-pot, and there they cloyed and clammed themſelves, till there was no getting out again; and when they found

themſelves periſhing in their beloved ſweets, they too late diſcovered how dear they paid for their paſt delights.

MORAL.

When once ſenſual pleaſures come to be habitual, it is exceeding difficult to get clear of them; but the mind, immerſed in the inordinate purſuit of them, runs the fate of the waſps in the fable.

REFLECTION.

We have an emblem here of thoſe fooliſh voluptuous men, who ſacrifice the peace, the honour, the comfort, and all other ſubſtantial ſatisfactions of life, to the temptation of a ſenſual appetite. And when once they are glued, as one may ſay, to their luſts and pleaſures, it is no eaſy matter to work themſelves out of them; but like Æſop's waſps ſtifled in the honey-pot, they proceed, till what they delighted in becomes the deſtruction both of ſoul and body.

FAB. 99. A YOUNG MAN AND A SWALLOW.

A PRODIGAL ſpendthrift had ſold his coat, and upon the ſight of a ſwallow that came before her time, made account that ſummer was now at hand, and away went his waiſtcoat too, ſo that he was naked to his ſhirt. A fit of bitter cold weather happened after this, which almoſt ſtarved both the bird and the ſpendthrift. Well, ſays the fellow, ſeeing the ſwallow periſhing with cold, what a wretched ſot art thou, thus to ruin both thyſelf and me!

MORAL.

Irregular accidents and inſtances are not to be drawn into precedent.

REFLECTION.

From this fable ariſes the proverb, *One ſwallow makes not a ſummer*; which intimates that there muſt be no drawing of general rules from particular exceptions. The young fellow's being ſo ready to blame the ſwallow rather than himſelf, ſhews the folly of mankind, who are always for throwing off the cauſe of their miſtakes from themſelves: A folly, to ſay the truth, derived from the firſt man: *The woman that thou gaveſt me*, ſaid Adam, *tempted me, and I did eat:* What a wretched ſot *art thou*, ſaid the young man, thus to miſlead me!—not,

was

was I, for ſuffering myſelf to be miſled by ſo ſilly a prognoſtic, as he ought to have ſaid. In ſhort, every man ſtands or falls to his own reaſon; and it is no excuſe to ſay, that I was miſled by example or conjecture, when I had the means before me of informing myſelf better.

FAB. 100. MERCURY AND A CARPENTER.

A CARPENTER dropt his ax into a river, and put up a prayer to Mercury, the god of artizans, to help him to it again. Mercury dived for it, and brought him up a golden one; but that was not it the fellow ſaid: And ſo he plunged a ſecond time, and fetched up another of ſilver: He ſaid that was not it neither. He tried once again, and then up comes an ax with a wooden handle, which the carpenter ſaid, was the very tool that he had loſt. Well, ſays Mercury, thou art ſo juſt a poor wretch, that I will give thee all three now for thy honeſty. The rumour of this ſtory being ſpread, it came into a knave's head to try the ſame experiment: And ſo away goes he, and down he ſits, ſniveling and yelping upon the bank of a river, that he had dropt his ax into the water there! Mercury heard his lamentation, and dipping once again for his ax, as he had done for the other, up he brings him a golden ax, and aſks the fellow if that were it: Yes, yes, ſays he, this is it. O thou impudent ſot, cries Mercury, to think of putting tricks upon him that ſees through the very heart of thee!— And ſo he ſent him away without any.

MORAL.

The great Searcher of our hearts is not to be impoſed upon; but he will take his own time, and his own manner, either to reward or puniſh.

REFLECTION.

Here are two men at their prayers; the one a downright plain dealer, and the other a deſigning hypocrite. The former has a reverence in his heart for the power that he invokes; he is not to be corrupted with gold or ſilver. He ſtands in awe of his conſcience, and makes good his profeſſion with his practice; receiving in the end the bleſſing of a reward for his integrity. The other worſhips with his eyes, his hands, and his voice; but all this is only to cover the cheat of a rotten heart.

He

He acknowledges a Divine Power, but at the ſame time he makes a mock of it, and provokes it. He ſtands convinced that God knows all the ſecrets of his heart, and yet tells him a lie to his face. But can ſuch a one expect to ſucceed in his impious attempt to impoſe on the Almighty! No, ſurely! and he ought to thank himſelf, if, inſtead of obtaining new benefits, he be deprived, as the wicked carpenter was, of thoſe he had before.

FAB. 101. A FOX AND GRAPES.

A LIQUORISH fox ſtood gaping under a vine, and licking his lips at a delicious cluſter of grapes he had eſpied out there; he fetched a hundred leaps at it, till at laſt, when he found there was no good to be done, Hang them, ſays he, they are as ſour as crabs; and ſo away he went.

FAB. 102. A WOLF AND A LION.

AS a wolf and a lion were abroad upon an adventure together; Hark, ſays the wolf, do not you hear the bleating of ſheep? My life for yours, Sir, I will go fetch you a purchaſe. Away he goes, and follows his ear, till he came juſt under the ſheep-fold; but it was ſo well fortified, and the dogs aſleep ſo near it, that back he comes ſneaking to the lion again, and tells him, There are ſheep yonder, it is true; but they are as lean as carrion, and we had even as good let them alone till they have more fleſh on their backs.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

A man ſhould never repine at the want of things that are out of his power to attain.

REFLECTION.

The fox's put-off in this fable is a moſt inſtructive point of philoſophy towards the government of our lives, provided that his fooling may be made our earneſt; as it would be much for our honour and quiet ſo to be. No man ſhall ever be miſerable, if he can but keep clear of the ſnare of hopes and fears, and antidote himſelf againſt the flatteries of the one, and the alarms of the other. It is a high point of Chriſtian, as well as of civil prudence, for a man to ſay thus to himſelf, before-hand of a thing that he has a mind to,

If

Fabjoy. Fox & Grapes. P. 80.



102. Wolf & Lion. P. 80.



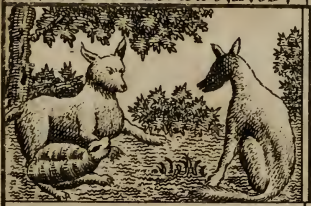
103. Boy & Snake. P. 81.



104. Fowler & Patridge. 82.



105. Hare & Tortoise. P. 83.



106. Apples & Horse Turds. 84.



107. Mole & her Dam. 84.



108. Bees & Patridges. 85.



109. Man bit by a Flea. 85.



110. Man & his two Wives. 86



If I cannot get it, I shall be better without it: Or if he can but say after the missing of it, It was better lost than found.

I knew a fine lady once, says Sir Roger L'Estrange, and she was a woman of sense, quality, and a very generous mind. She lay under mortifications in abundance, and yet was never observed to be peevish or angry upon any provocation whatsoever; and the reason she gave for it was this, It will make me look old. So that it is not so much the want of ability to master our affections, as the want of resolution to go through with the experiment. This is a way to keep us firm in all trials: It comes all to a case now, upon the force of the moral, whether we quit our vain desires, as the fox did the grapes, because he could not come at them; or as the wolf did the sheep, because he durst not venture upon them. There is a virtue and a blessing in it, both ways, in getting the better of our passions; which might certainly be done, if we had but half the tenderness for our minds and consciences, that we have for our bodies and fortunes.

FAB. 103. A BOY AND A SNAKE.

A BOY groping for eels laid his hand upon a snake; but the snake finding it was pure simplicity, and not malice against himself, admonished him of his mistake: Keep yourself well while you are well, says the snake; for if you meddle with me, you will repent your bargain.

MORAL.

It is wisdom, as well as justice, to distinguish betwixt actions of misadventure and of design.

REFLECTION.

Every thing has at least two handles to it, and both parts should be well examined, before a man can make either a warrantable judgment, or a prudent choice. The boy's mistake here is no more than what we have every day before our eyes in common practice; and that which the snake says to the boy, every man's reason says to himself. What is his taking a snake for an eel, but our taking vice for virtue? He did it unwarily; and so do we many times too. He took the one for the other, because they were so much alike, that at first view he

he could not distinguish them. And are not virtue and vice as like in several instances as one egg is to another? How shall a man know at first blush hypocrisy from piety; or true charity from ostentation? Time and examination may do much, but the boy was groping, and in the dark, and so might well be mistaken. The snake told him of his error, and the danger of it; but passed it over, because there was no ill-will to it. This is the very case of our reason to us in all our misdoings. It checks us for what is past; and advises us for the future to have a care of false appearances.

FAB. 104. A FOWLER AND A PARTRIDGE.

A PARTIDGE taken by a fowler offered to decoy as many of her companions into the snare as she could, upon condition that he would give her quarter. No, says he, you shall die the rather for that very reason, because you would be so base as to betray your friends to save yourself.

MORAL.

Treachery is never to be approved, how convenient soever in some cases; for it undermines the very foundations of society.

REFLECTION.

The fowler's resolution here, upon the partridge's proposal, was wise and generous. All manner of treachery is abominable in the sight both of God and man, and stands reprehended in this fable. The partridge's case was a very unhappy one; for her life was at stake, and she was induced by her apprehensions to to make an infamous proposal to save it; but the weakness all this while does not excuse the perfidy, though it may seem in some measure to extenuate the crime, by the poor creature's lying under an almost insuperable frailty. The fowler, however, justly made an example of her for a terror to others. Now if a treachery of this quality be so unpardonable, what shall we say to those that sell their country, their souls, and their religion, for money, and rate divinity at so much a pound? And then, to consummate the wickedness, finish the work with malice that they began with avarice.

FAB. 105. A HARE AND A TORTOISE.

WHAT a dull heavy creature, says a hare, is this same tortoise! And yet, says the tortoise! I will run with you for a wager. It was *done and done*, and the fox by consent was to be the judge. They started together, and the tortoise kept jogging on still, till he came to the end of the course. The hare, to shew his contempt for his competitor, skipt about here and there, till he had tired himself, and then securely laid himself down about mid-way, and took a nap; for, says he, I can fetch up the tortoise when I please. But, as he had over-tired, so he over-slept himself, it seems; for when he came to wake, though he scudded away as fast as he was able, the tortoise got to the post before him, and won the wager.

MORAL.

Up, and be doing, *is an edifying text*; *for action is the business of life, and there is no thought of coming to the end of our journey in time, if we supinely sleep by the way.*

REFLECTION.

This fable shews, on one hand, in the hare the great folly of presumption. Who would have believed, that the tortoise had any chance for winning a race from the hare? But the foolish hare, presuming upon his natural advantages, and having the utmost contempt for his adversary, lost the race by skipping, folly, and over-security. On the other hand, in the constant even pace of the tortoise, who got first to the goal, is shewn the benefit of patience, diligence, and perseverance; which, maugre all odds and appearances in every competition, must certainly win the prize, and inherit the blessing. History affords an hundred instances of battles lost against all manner of probability, by the over-security of one side, trusting to numbers and situation, and through an undue contempt of an adversary; while the caution and prudence of the weaker have overcome the stronger, and beat them quite out of the field.

FAB. 106. APPLES AND HORSE-TURDS.

UPON a very great fall of rain, the current carried away a huge heap of apples, together with a dunghill that lay in the water-courſe. They floated a good while together like brethren and companions; and as they went thus dancing down in the ſtream, the horſe-turds would be every foot crying out, *Alack-a-day, how we apples ſwim.*

MORAL.

The moſt worthleſs fellows are oftentimes the vaineſt, and attribute to themſelves the glory of every thing, though they contribute nothing to any good purpoſe.

REFLECTION.

Come ſays the blackberry, to the peach and the apple, who were contending for the preference, *We* are all *friends*, let us have no jangling among *ourſelves*. So ſays the fly on the chariot-wheel, *What a duſt do I raiſe!* So ſaid Lamb, the corn-cutter, to Dr. Mead and Dr. Hollings, *We* phyſicians! Every inſignificant wretch puts a value upon himſelf, and the more worthleſs, generally the more vain. But what is the end of his vanity and conceit? He only makes himſelf ridiculous to the reſt of the world, who, but for his preſumption, might paſs by with *pity*, what now they treat with *contempt*; for ſuch a one is as much beneath the *indignation* of a wiſe man, as the inſolent braying of the aſs was below the notice of the lion.

FAB. 107. A MOLE AND HER DAM.

MOTHER, ſays a mole to her dam, *Here is ſtrange ſmell, methinks.* And then ſhe was at it again; *There is a mulberry-tree, I perceive.* And ſo a third time; *What a clattering of hammers do I hear!* Daughter, ſays the old one, you have now quite betrayed yourſelf; for I thought you had wanted only one ſenſe, and I find you want three; for you can neither hear, nor ſmell, any more than you can ſee.

MORAL.

Men labour under many imperfections, that nobody would take notice of, if they did not betray themſelves.

REFLECTION.

The imperfections of boaſters, and ignorant pretenders to ſcience or knowledge, would not be half ſo much

much taken notice of, if their own vanity, and their being over-solicitous to conceal their infirmities, did not make proclamation of them; for by attempting to cover their defects or ignorance, without being called upon to do so, they the more effectually expose themselves.

FAB. 108. BEES AND PARTRIDGES.

A FLIGHT of bees, and a covey of partridges, that were hard put to it for water in a great drought, went to a farmer, and begged a sup of him to quench their thirst. The partridges offered in return to dig his vineyard for it, and the bees with their stings to secure him from thieves. I have oxen and dogs, says the farmer, that do me these offices already, without standing upon terms. To them therefore I shall extend my benevolence; and have no occasion for your service.

MORAL.

Charity begins at home: *But the necessary duty of it in one place, does not discharge the Christian exercise of it in another.*

REFLECTION.

Charity is a humane as well as a Christian virtue; but still it is to be employed in the first place upon those that have the fairest right to it: It is one thing, I must confess, to condition for a good office, and another to do it *gratis*; so that the husbandman took the proposal by the right handle in that respect; but his being provided of servants already to do his work, was no excuse for his want of charity to relieve his distressed neighbours; especially when, as in the case of the bees and the partridges here, they offer all the returns in their power.

FAB. 109. A MAN BIT BY A FLEA.

A FELLOW upon being bit by a flea, called out to Hercules for help. The flea gets away, and the man peevishly expostulates: Well, Hercules, says he, you that would not take my part against a sorry flea, will never stand by me in time of need, against a more powerful enemy. Little deservest thou any assistance from me, *says the god*, in thy greater affairs, that canst invoke my aid on so trifling an occasion.

MORAL.

We ought not to put up our petitions to Heaven for every trifle that we may think we want, or to be relieved from any petty vexation; much less ought we to take pet, if our impertinent prayers are not immediately answered.

REFLECTION.

It is an ill habit to squander away our wishes and our prayers upon paltry fooleries, when the great concerns of life and death, heaven and hell, lie all at stake. Who but a madman, that has so many necessary and capital duties of Christianity to think of, would ever have made a deliverance from a flea biting a part of his litany? It makes our devotion ridiculous, to be so unfeeling on the one side, and so over-sensible and solicitous on the other.

FAB. 110. A MAN AND TWO WIVES.

A MORE than middle-aged man, who was half grey-headed, took a fancy to marry two wives, one in years equal to his own, the other much younger. They took mighty care of him to all manner of purposes, and still, as they were combing the good man's head, the matronly wife plucked out all the brown hairs, and the younger the grey: So that they left the man no better than a bald buzzard betwixt them.

MORAL.

Inequality of years in matrimony is of all things to be avoided.

REFLECTION.

Nature, decency, true convenience, and every branch of human felicity, plead strongly against gay youth being yoked with declining age in marriage. The infirmities to which the one is subject, and the inconsideration which possesses the other, make it impossible there should be any tolerable ease or comfort between them, much less happiness. Sordid interest, it is true, and vile dependence may make sometimes the youthful yoke-fellow put on an appearance of regard for the older; but affection must needs be wanting, and the hope of being released by death from the unequal engagement, must be all that makes the case bearable on one side; and must not this be a very comfortable reflection on the other! How much to blame then are

those

Fab. 111 Frogs wanting Water, P. 87.



112. Dog Cock & Fox. P. 88.



113. Bat Bramble & Cormorant, 89.



114. Lark & Fowler. P. 89.



115. Miser & his Gold. 90.



116. One Eyd Stag. 91.



117. Stag & Lion, P. 91.



118 Goat & Vine 92



119. A Cr Lion & Cock. 92.



120. Gardner & his Dog. 94.



thoſe parents who for ſordid motives oblige their children to couple ſo unequally! And what a baſe, and to be ſuſpected, mind, even as to common honeſty, muſt thoſe young perſons have of either ſex, who not being obliged by neceſſity, for filthy lucre or worldly grandeur-ſake, voluntarily chooſe to ſubject themſelves to a ſtate, with a perſon they vow to love and honour, and yet think they can never be happy with, and of conſequence continually wiſh dead! It is one degree of prudence in ſuch a caſe, and the only one that the older perſon can ſhew, after ſo unequal a match, to expect and be prepared for the worſt that can happen: If a woman, to be ſlighted and deſpiſed; if a man, to be—what wants no explanation.

FAB. III. FROGS WANTING WATER.

UPON the drying of a lake, two frogs, upon a ſearch for water elſewhere, diſcovered a very deep well. Come, ſays one to the other, let us even go down here, without looking any further. You ſay well, ſays her companion; but if the water ſhould fail us here too, how ſhall we get out again?

MORAL.

It is good to look before we leap, *as the proverb ſays; for haſty reſolutions are ſeldom fortunate, and it is a piece of neceſſary prudence for a man, before he reſolves upon any thing, to conſider what may be the conſequences of it.*

REFLECTION.

When a man wants any thing, let him look for it in time, and conſider well before-hand what occaſion he has for it, and upon what terms it is to be had; for there may be ſuch conditions that a man would not comply with, even for the ſaving or redeeming of his life. There are other caſes where a man muſt part with more for the getting of a thing than it is worth. Some again where a perſon runs the riſque of an abſolute ruin for the gaining of a preſent ſupply. Wherefore it is but common prudence to make a ſtrict calculation of the profit or loſs on both ſides before we reſolve. I want money, but I will not make myſelf a ſlave for it. I want a friend at court, but I will not forfeit the character of a man of honour, or the con-

ſcience of a Chriſtian and an honeſt man, to purchaſe ſuch a friend. I am in priſon, but I will not play the knave to ſet myſelf at liberty. Theſe are all neceſſary deliberations upon the matter here in queſtion. Let us ſee how we ſhall get *out* again, ſays the frog, before we go *in*.

FAB. 112. A DOG, A COCK, AND A FOX.

A DOG and a cock took a journey together. The dog kennelled in the body of a hollow tree, and the cock rooſted at night upon the boughs. The cock crowed about midnight (at his uſual hour;) which brought a fox, that was abroad upon the hunt, immediately to the tree; and there he ſtood licking of his lips at the cock, and wheedling of him to get him down. He proteſted he never heard ſo angelical a voice ſince he was born; and what would not he do now, to hug the creature that had given him ſo admirable a ſerenade! Pray, ſays the cock, ſpeak to the porter below to open the door, and I will come down to you: The fox, little dreaming of the dog ſo near, did as he was directed, and the dog preſently ſeized and worried him.

MORAL.

When a man has to do with an adverſary who is too crafty or too ſtrong for him, it is right to turn him off to his match.

REFLECTION.

Experience makes many a wiſe man of a fool, and ſecurity makes many a fool of a wiſe man. We have an inſtance of the former in the cock's over-reaching the fox; and of the other in the fox's ſupine confidence, that made him ſo intent upon his prey, as to neglect his ſafety; and to fall himſelf into the pit that he had digged for another. It is much the ſame caſe in the world, when Providence is pleaſed to confound the preſumptuous, the falſe, the mighty, and the blood-thirſty, by judgments of lice and frogs; that is to ſay, by the moſt deſpicable of inſtruments; and that frequently at a criſis of time, when they think themſelves ſure of the ſucceſs of their miſchievous projects.

FAB. 113. A BAT, BRAMBLE, AND CORMORANT.

A BAT, a bramble, and a cormorant, entered into partnerſhip together. The bat's adventure was ready money, which he took up at intereſt; the bramble's was in clothes; and the cormorant's in braſs. They put to ſea, and it fell out, that the ſhip and goods were both loſt by ſtreſs of weather: but the three merchants got ſafe to land. Since the time of this miſcarriage, the bat never ſtirs abroad till night, for fear of his creditors. The bramble lays hold of all the clothes he can come at in hope to light upon his own again: And the cormorant is ſtill ſauntering by the ſea-ſide, to ſee if he can find any of his braſs caſt up.

MORAL.

The impreſſion of any notable misfortune will commonly ſtick by a man as long as he lives.

REFLECTION.

It is with almoſt all people in caſes of fright or diſtraction of mind, as it was with our merchant-adventurers here. We are not to ſet our hearts too ſtrongly upon the things of this world; and the only way to be happy and quiet, is to make all contingencies indifferent to us, eſpecially thoſe which we know may very poſſibly befal us, at the time we undertake any affair. As the merchant who ventures by ſea knows that a tempeſt and a ſhip-wreck are too often the lot of ſuch, and tho' he hopes it will not be his caſe, yet he ought to reſign himſelf to Providence, and be prepared to bear it, if it ſhould.

FAB. 114. A LARK AND A FOWLER.

A POOR lark taken by a bird-catcher, who was juſt about to put her to death, lamented heartily that ſhe ſhould be ſacrificed for ſo ſmall a fault as having taken one pitiful grain of corn when ſhe was hungry. Why, tit for tat, ſays he, you have taken corn to ſatisfy your hunger, and I have ſeized upon you to appeaſe mine.

MORAL.

Paſſion, appetite, and partiality, govern the world.

REFLECTION.

It is too much the practice of mankind to cozen and defraud one another for their own intereſt. The little

value of the thing was but a poor excuſe for the bad principle demonſtrated in taking what was another's. But yet the deſign of the fowler ſtill leſs admitted of an excuſe; for he laid the bait in the way of the lark, on purpoſe to decoy and enſnare her. Temptation often makes the thief, and to throw a bait in the way, and afterwards rigorouſly to exact the penalty, to the ruin of the inſnared, and for the inſnarer's own particular advantage, who poſſibly may be intitled to a reward thereby, is a baſeneſs which ſhews ſuch a man capable of any thing where his intereſt is concerned.

FAB. 115. A MISER BURYING HIS GOLD.

A COVETOUS wretch turned his effects into gold, melted that down, and buried it in the ground, and never failed viſiting of it every morning. This being obſerved, his hoard one night was carried off; which he finding out next morning, was almoſt diſtracted. What is all this rage for? ſays one of his neighbours; while you were reſolved not to *uſe* your gold, you could not be ſaid to *have* it. It is but laying a ſtone where you laid your money, and fancying that ſtone to be your treaſure, and there is your gold again.

MORAL.

Better no eſtate at all, than the cares and vexations that attend the poſſeſſion, without the uſe of it.

REFLECTION.

We are never the better for the poſſeſſion of any thing, barely for the *propriety* ſake; but it is the *uſe* and *application* of it towards the conveniences of life, and the comforts of human ſociety, that gives every thing its value. The bleſſings of Providence, which are common and diffuſive, ought not to lie idle; and whoever buries his talent, either of underſtanding, or of fortune, breaks a ſacred truſt, and cozens thoſe who ſtand in need of it. But we have a ſort of ſordid wretches among us, who had rather caſt their ſilver and gold into the mine from whence it was taken, or leave it at the mercy of thieves and common hazards, than that any man living ſhould be the better for it.

FAB. 116. A ONE-EYED STAG.

A ONE-EYED ſtag that was afraid of the huntſmen at land, kept a watch that way, and fed with his blind-ſide toward an arm of the ſea, where he thought there was no danger. In this hope of ſecurity, he was ſtruck with an arrow from a boat, and ſo ended his days with this lamentation: Here am I deſtroyed, ſays he, where I reckoned myſelf to be ſafe on the one hand; and no evil has befallen me where I moſt dreaded it, on the other. But it is my comfort that I intended the beſt.

MORAL.

We are liable to many accidents that no care or foreſight can prevent: But we are to provide however the beſt we can againſt them, and leave the reſt to Providence.

REFLECTION.

We are many times preſerved or deſtroyed by thoſe accidents or counſels that in all probability ſhould have had quite contrary effects. But yet it is our part to act according to reaſon, and commit ourſelves to Heaven for the reſt. The wiſeſt of men have their follies or blind ſides, and have their enemies too, who watch to take advantage of their weakneſs. It behoves us therefore to look to ourſelves on the blind ſide, as the part that lies moſt expoſed to an attack. And yet, when we have done our beſt to prevent miſchief, the very precaution itſelf ſerves many times to contribute to our ruin. In ſhort, the ways and workings of Providence are unſearchable, and it is not in the power of human prudence to obviate all the accidents of life.

FAB. 117. A STAG AND A LION.

A STAG, cloſely purſued by the huntſmen, fled for ſafety into a lion's den; and as he was juſt expiring under the paw of the lion: Miſerable creature that I am! ſays he, to fly for protection from one enemy, and to fall into the jaws of a worſe!

MORAL.

Out of the frying-pan into the fire, *ſays the proverb. Many men, to avoid one danger, have run into a greater.*

REFLECTION.

The ſtag's fate was very hard; he was purſued by a danger which he beheld inevitable and immediate. He

He had, however, a chance to save himself in the refuge he took; for though he had known it was the den of a lion he was running into, the lion might have been absent, or, if present, might have fallen upon his pursuers as well as him: But it has been the case of many men to fly for refuge, in their distress, to such as they have found to be oppressors and murderers, instead of patrons and protectors, and that even to the breach of the ties of gratitude, as well as humanity. Pompey the Great had such a hard fate when he fled from the victorious and generous Cæsar, and met his death from the base and cowardly Egyptians, to whom he applied for refuge: And it would have been far more happy and more glorious for him, to have fallen in the battle which he lost.

FAB. 118. A GOAT AND A VINE.

A GOAT, hard pressed by the huntsmen, took sanctuary in a vineyard, and there lay close, under the covert of a vine. So soon as he thought the danger over, he fell to browzing upon the leaves; and broke down by this means the very branches that concealed his horns. This discovered him to one who happened to be the hindermost in the chase; he called back the others, and the goat was killed with this conviction upon him, that his punishment was just, for offering violence to his protector.

MORAL.

A speedy and exemplary vengeance often pursues those who repay evil for good, and seek the ruin of their protectors.

REFLECTION.

This fable exposes the baseness of that worst of vices, ingratitude. The obligations of hospitality and protection are so sacred, that nothing can absolve us from the discharge of those duties. The goat's punishment was the more exemplary, as it was inflicted upon him in the very act of his baseness.

FAB. 119. AN ASS, LION, AND A COCK.

AS a cock and an ass were feeding on one ground together, up comes a lion open-mouthed towards the ass: The cock happened just then to crow, as the ass, through

through fear, began to bray; and away ſcours the lion, who is ſaid to be ſcared at the crowing of a cock. The aſs brayed on, vainly imagining it was that which was ſo terrible to the lion; and had the folly to purſue him: But ſo ſoon as they were got out of the hearing of the cock, the lion turned ſhort upon him, and tore him to pieces.

MORAL.

Many a bragging coxcomb has been ruined by a miſtake of fear in an adverſary, and a fancy of courage in himſelf.

REFLECTION.

The flight of the lion muſt be imputed here to the natural averſion he has to the crowing of a cock. This is the tradition; but it ſhall break no ſquares whether it be ſo or not: For the philoſophy holds good in other inſtances no leſs wonderful, whether it be true or falſe in this. How many inſuperable diſagreements do we meet with, in the buſineſs of meats, drinks, and medicines! in plants, minerals, and living creatures! Now theſe impulſes are no more to be controlled, than the primary and unchangeable powers and laws of Nature: And theſe inſtincts, after all, are no more to be reaſoned upon, than they are to be reſiſted; and therefore it is that we call them occult qualities; which is all one with ſaying, that we do not underſtand how they work, or what they are. Now it is one thing to ſubmit to an abſolute force, another thing to fly, and yield to a natural infirmity. So that it is no departure from the dignity of a lion to fly, when nature drives him; Neither is at all to the aſs's reputation to purſue, when vanity, folly, and raſhneſs, tranſport him.

The aſs, we ſee, lies under many miſtakes here, and the more and the groſſer they are, the more ſuitable ſtill to his character. How many ſuch aſſes are there in the world, who huff, look big, ſtare, dreſs, cock, ſwagger, at the ſame noiſy bluſtering rate? And nothing is more familiar, than for a whiffling fop, who has not ſo much as one grain of the ſenſe or ſoul of a man of honour in him, to ape the part of a hero. But ſometimes ſuch a one provokes a lion by his ſtupid temerity, and meets with the chaſtiſement due to his braying inſolence.

FAB. 120. A GARDENER AND HIS DOG.

A GARDENER's dog dropt into a well, and his master letting himself down, reached forth his hand to help him out. The cur, thinking it was only to duck him deeper, snapt him by the fingers. The master hereupon got up again, and left him as he found him. Nay, says he, I am well enough served, to take so much pains for the saving of one that knows not how to take the favour.

MORAL.

Obligations and benefits are cast away upon two sorts of people; those that do not understand them, and those that are not sensible of them.

REFLECTION.

There is no fastening an obligation upon those who know not when they are well used; but who, suspecting groundlessly a good intention to serve them, reject with unthankfulness the well-meant kindness.

FAB. 121. A SNAKE AND A CRAB.

THERE was a familiarity contracted betwixt a snake and a crab. The crab was a plain-dealing creature, that advised his companion to give over shuffling and doubling, and to practise good faith. The snake went on in his old way; So that the crab broke acquaintance with him, and soon after found him dead, stretched out at his length; and then looking upon him, said, This had never befallen you, my old crooked acquaintance, if you had but lived as straight as you died.

MORAL.

There is nothing more agreeable in conversation, than a frank open way of dealing, and a simplicity of manners.

REFLECTION.

Good counsel is lost upon an habitual ill-nature. This fable is a figure upon a figure, in opposing the straightness of the body of the snake after he was dead, to the crookedness of his manners when he was living. But the licence of mythology will bear out the hardness of the allusion.

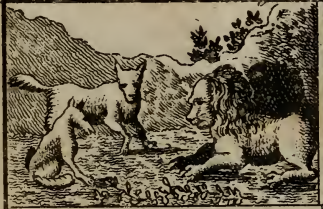
Fab 120. Snake & Crab. P. 94.



122. Shepherd & Wolf. 95.



123. Lion Fox & Wolf. P. 96.



124. Drunkard & his Wife. 97.



125. Raven & Swan. P. 98.



126. Swallow & Crow. 99.



127. Nightingale & Bat. P. 99.



128. Roasted Cockles. 100.



129. Travellers & Money-bag 101.



130. Two Neighbour Frogs 102.



FAB. 122. A SHEPHERD AND A YOUNG WOLF.

A SHEPHERD took a wolf's ſucking whelp, and trained it up with his dogs. The whelp fed with them, grew up with them, and whenſoever they went out upon the chace of a wolf, the whelp would be ſure to make one. It fell out ſometimes that the wolf eſcaped; but this domeſtic wolf would be ſtill hunting on, after the dogs had given over the chace, till he came up to his true brethren, where he took part of the prey with them, and then went back again to his maſter. And when he could come in for no ſnacks with the wolves, he would now-and-then make free, by-the-bye, with a ſtraggling ſheep out of the flock. He carried on this trade for a while; but at laſt was caught in the fact, and hanged by his injured maſter.

MORAL.

Men naturally falſe and treacherous are no more to be reclaimed than wolves. Benefits but augment their power to do miſchief, and they never fail to make uſe of it to the prejudice of their benefactors.

REFLECTION.

Ill diſpoſitions may be diſſembled for a while, but nature is very hardly to be altered, either by counſel or by education. It may do well enough for curioſity and experiment, to try how far ill-natured men, and other creatures, may be wrought upon by fair uſage and good breeding; but the inclination and cruelty of the dam will be hardly ever out of the whelp. *Thruſt Lack nature with a pitchfork*, ſays the poet, *and it will return.* This fable is a true portrait of an ungrateful and treacherous mind, which, according to the proverb, *Holds with the hare, and runs with the hound*; which pretends greater zeal than others, like the wolf's whelp in the chace, in the detection and purſuit of a common enemy; but at the ſame time divides ſpoils with him; and, rather than want an opportunity of doing miſchief, will prey privately upon the property he pretends to defend. Many ſuch inſtances we might give in public life; and there have been too many ſuch alſo in private life. The puniſhment ſo richly merited in the fable is heartily to be wiſhed whenever they happen, and it is pity it ſhould be wanted.

FAB. 123. A LION, FOX, AND A WOLF.

THE king of beaſts being grown old and ſickly, all the ſubjects of the foreſt ſaving only the fox, went to pay their duties to him. The wolf took this occaſion to do the fox a good office: I can aſſure your majeſty, ſays he, it is nothing but pride and inſolence that keeps the fox from ſhewing himſelf at court. The fox coming to know this, preſented himſelf before the lion, and aſſured him that the reaſon of his abſence was only owing to his being engaged in deep ſtudy to find a remedy for his majeſty's illneſs; and that he had been ſo happy as to hit upon an infallible one. What is it? ſays the lion, very eagerly. Why, ſays the fox, it is the ſkin of a flayed wolf wrapped reeking warm round your majeſty's body; and my life for it, it will prove an abſolute cure. The wolf finding the lion hearken to the advice was ſneaking off; but the fox was not wanting to aſſiſt the royal officers in waiting to pull his ſkin over his ears; and whilſt it was doing, ſneering, told poor *Iſgrim*, that he was now a fit warning-piece to all malicious backbiters, how they irritated a prince againſt their abſent fellow-ſubjects.

MORAL.

Backbiters and picktbanks are the baſeſt of men, and it cannot fail of giving pleaſure to every one when they are detected, and meet with their deſerts.

REFLECTION.

Nothing is more common in the world than theſe wolfiſh back-friends, whether it be in law, in government, or private families, eſpecially in thoſe of the great. A man who is declining in his credit already with his principal, is the conſtant ſubject of this calumnious diſpoſition. And if any crafty contrivances, artifices, or ſtratagems, are at any time to be excuſed, they are upon ſuch occaſions as this, where the malicious deſigns of a malevolent backbiter are to be counter-worked. But yet it were to be wiſhed that none but wolves and foxes were to experience theſe countermining projects, and then when one raſcal was too hard for another, honeſt men would have nothing to do but rejoice, which ſoever got the better. But the misfortune is, that it is generally the innocent man who is caught

caught in the ſnare, and ruined by the plots of wicked wolves and foxes in human ſhape.

FAB. 124. A DRUNKARD AND HIS WIFE.

A WOMAN who had the misfortune to have a ſuddling huſband, laid him once, when he was dead-drunk, in a charnel-houſe. By the time ſhe thought he might be come to himſelf again, away goes ſhe, and knocks at the door. Who is there? ſays the toper. One, ſays the woman, with a hoarſe voice, that brings meat for the dead. Friend, ſays he, bring me drink rather: I wonder any body that knows me, ſhould bring me one without the other. Nay, then, ſays ſhe, in a voice much better known to him, I find thou art quite irreclaimable; I muſt even give thee up to thy own evil deſtiny; for what thou loveſt will certainly ſhorten thy days; all I fear is, thou wilt firſt beggar me and thy family.

MORAL.

Inveterate ill habits become another nature to us, and when they have got poſſeſſion of us, we may almoſt as well be taken to pieces, and new put together again, as mended.

REFLECTION.

The intent of this fable is to work a reformation in us in time, by ſhewing that evil habits are very hard to be cured; for they take root by degrees, till they come in the end to be paſt both remedy and ſhame. Habitual debauches make exceſs of drink as neceſſary to a man as common air, though it certainly cuts ſhort his thread of life, and brings on an early old age; beſides the miſchiefs it does to a man's family and affairs in the mean time, and the ſcandal it brings upon himſelf; for a ſot is one of the moſt odious and contemptible characters in life, next to that of an hypocrite and ungrateful man: Nay, he may be ſaid, in a ſtrong ſenſe, to be an ungrateful man, and that to the Almighty, who has given him reaſonable faculties, which he is continually abuſing, and to his family, which he is perpetually injuring. Yet there are thoſe that can never ſleep without their load, nor enjoy one eaſy thought till they have laid all their cares to reſt with a bottle. It is much the ſame thing with other ſenſual pleaſures, where mens bodies and minds are

given up to delight in them. But the extravagance is never ſo deſperate, as when the underſtanding is taken up with the ſtudy and meditation of thoſe pleaſures, which the body is no longer in condition to practiſe; and that is the moſt hopeleſs and incurable ſtate of an evil diſpoſition, when drink upon drink is made uſe of for a remedy.

FAB. 125. A RAVEN AND A SWAN.

A RAVEN fancying to himſelf that the ſwan's beauty proceeded principally from his often waſhing and diet, quitted his former courſe of life and food, and betook himſelf to the lakes and rivers: But as the water did him no good at all for his complexion, ſo the experiment coſt him his life, he being utterly unfitted to gather his ſuſtenance from the waters.

MORAL.

Natural inclinations may be wrought upon by good counſel and diſcipline; but there are certain ſpecific properties and impreſſions, that are never to be altered or defaced.

REFLECTION.

What is bred in the bone will never out of the fleſh: And there can be no thought of altering the qualities, and colour, or the condition of life, that Providence has allotted us.

It is labour in vain, as the proverb ſays, *to attempt to waſh the blackamoor white*; much more will it be a fruitleſs and vain taſk, to endeavour to mend any of the works of Nature; for ſhe never did any thing amiſs. *What nature does, God does*; whoſe decrees are unchangeable, and all his works are perfection in their kind. It is a great madneſs then to attempt any alteration upon them. But next to the force of *natural impreſſions*, we may reckon that of *cuſtoms* and *habits*.

This fable, ſtill more literally taken, may ſerve as a caution to ſuch fantaſtic perſons, as run into ſudden changes of diet, and alter at once their manner of living, in order to avoid ſome remote and perhaps fanciful diſtemper; or as ſome ladies, and finical ladies-men, have done ere now, to try practices upon themſelves, in hopes to mend their complexions or ſhapes; and, in ſhort, as we may ſay, to make themſelves *better than*

than well. Such persons thus playing tricks with, and trying experiments upon, a tolerable constitution, have often brought upon themselves real and lasting illnesses; to get rid of which, and be in *statu quo*, they would be glad to compound for much worse shapes and complexions, and a much more indifferent state of health, than what they wanted to mend.

FAB. 126. A SWALLOW AND A CROW.

A CROW disputing with a swallow for the prize of beauty, said, Yours, at best, is only a spring beauty; mine lasts all the year round.

MORAL.

A durable good is infinitely to be preferred to a transitory one.

REFLECTION.

What are the pleasures of sense, compared to those of a good conscience? And what the enjoyments of this fleeting life to those of eternity? Satisfactions that are attended with satiety and surfeits, and flatten in the very tasting, to joys that shall endure for ever fresh, and always blooming? These are what a wise and good man will always prefer. But the greatest part of the world are so unhappily immersed in sensual delights, that they cannot look forward with faith enough to influence their practice; but, preferring the evanescent *now*, to the permanent *hereafter*, seldom find their mistake, till it becomes too late to remedy it. A death-bed reflection brings the true object nearer to the eye, and shews the folly of the past preference; but when we say, it is a *death-bed* reflection, what a horror must that impress upon a thoughtful mind!

FAB. 127. A NIGHTINGALE AND BAT.

A NIGHTINGALE singing in a cage at a window at midnight, a bat asked her why she did not sing in the day, as well as in the night? Why, says the nightingale, I was catched singing in the day, and so I took it for a warning: You should have thought of this then, says the other, *before* you were taken: As the case stands now, you are in no danger to be snapt singing again; for you cannot well be worse than you are.

MORAL.

After-wit is seldom good.

REFLECTION.

The nightingale's reason was a very indifferent one, and justly sneered at by the bat, as her case was now irremediable: But yet as to the moral of this fable in general, though a man may have gone astray, and fallen into some great error, it is not amiss to call to mind where he went out of his way, and to look back step by step into all his miscarriages and mistakes. The glass of life is behind us, and we must look into what is *past*, if we would take a view of what is to *come*. A fault committed, or a misfortune incurred, cannot be recalled, it is true; but yet the meditating upon one false step may help to prevent another. Wherefore it is good, upon the point of common prudence, to be thoughtful, provided we be not more solicitous than the thing is worth, and that we make a right use of those reflections; that is to say, an use of repentance, where we did morally amiss; an use of rectifying our judgments, where we did foolishly; and an use of caution in both cases, never to do the same thing over again. This is no more than what in conscience, equity, and reason, we are bound to do. But we must have a care all this while, not to run into false consequences for want of laying things and things together, and to sham fallacies upon the world for current reason, as the nightingale was taken singing in the day when she was at liberty. And what is this to her resolution of singing only in the night, now she is in the cage? But even this affords room for this further observation; That when some men have brought themselves into great misfortunes, they will give any reason rather than the right one, lest it should bring deserved blame and unpitied censure on themselves.

FAB. 128. ROASTED COCKLES.

Some people were roasting of cockles, and they hissed in the fire. Well, says one, who stood ready to devour his share, these are very merry creatures sure, to sing when their houses are on fire over their heads.

MORAL.

MORAL.

To be able to make a jeſt of the misfortunes of others, ſhews a very vile and abandoned nature.

REFLECTION.

Nothing is more brutal and barbraous, nothing more contrary to humanity and common ſenſe, than the humour of inſulting over the miſerable.

FAB. 129. TWO TRAVELLERS AND A MONEY-BAG.

TWO travellers being upon the way together, one of them ſtoops, and takes up ſomething. Look ye here, ſays he, I have found a *bag of money:* No, ſays the other; when two friends are together, you muſt not ſay, *I have found it*, but, *We have found it*. I beg your excuſe for that, ſays the other; I found it, and I will keep it. The word was no ſooner out, but immediately comes a *hue and cry* after a gang of thieves who had taken a purſe upon the road. Alas! Brother, ſays the finder, We ſhall be utterly undone. Oh fie! ſays the other, you muſt not ſay, *We ſhall be undone*, but *I ſhall be undone*; for if I am to have no part in the finding, I will never go halves in the hanging.

MORAL.

Men are willing enough to have partners in loſs, but not in profit; but they that will enter into leagues and partnerſhips muſt take the good and the bad, one with another.

REFLECTION.

We have a thouſand diſappointments in the ordinary courſe of life, to anſwer this in the fable. Many a man finds the purſe of gold in a miſtreſs, in a bottle, in an office, and in all the other vain ſatisfactions of this world: And what is the end of it at laſt? but when he has compaſſed his longing, gratified his appetite, or, as he fancies, made his fortune perhaps, he grows preſently ſick of his purchaſe; his *conſcience* is the *hue and cry* that purſues him, and what he reckoned upon as a piece of good luck at the time, proves his unhappineſs in the end.

FAB. 130. TWO NEIGHBOUR FROGS.

THERE were two frogs; one of which lived in a pond, and the other in a ſhallow ditch hard by, on the other ſide of the highway. The pond frog finding the water begin to fail upon the road, would fain have gotten the other over to her in the pool, where ſhe might have been ſafe; but ſhe was uſed to the place, ſhe ſaid, and would not remove. And what was the end of it? Why, the wheel of a cart, when the ditch was juſt dry and hard at bottom, drove over her a while after, and cruſhed her to pieces.

MORAL.

Some people are ſo liſtleſs and ſlothful, that they will rather lie ſtill, and in a manner die in a ditch, than ſtir one foot to help themſelves out of it.

REFLECTION.

Cuſtom is another nature; and what betwixt obſtinacy and ſloth, let it be never ſo ill and inconvenient, people are very loth to quit it. He that does nothing at all, acts worſe than he that, upon the account of human frailty, does amiſs; for nothing can be more contrary to God himſelf, who is a pure act, than the ſleeping and drowſing away our life and reaſon, which was given us for ſo many better purpoſes. The frog in the highway is the lively figure of ſuch a man; for a life of ſloth is not the life of a reaſonable creature. It is odious to God and man, uſeleſs to the world, irkſome to itſelf, miſerable in all eſtates, and utterly incapable either of taſting or enjoying any thing of comfort. The frog was uſed to the place, ſhe ſaid; and rather than ſtir to help herſelf, there ſhe lay, till her guts were daſhed out.

FAB. 131. A BEE-MASTER.

A THIEF came into a bee-garden in the abſence of the maſter, and robbed the hives. The owner diſcovered it upon his return, and ſtood pauſing how it ſhould come to paſs. The bees in the interim came laden home out of the fields from feeding, and, miſſing their combs, they fell powdering down in ſwarms upon their maſter. Well, ſays he, you are a company of ſenſeleſs and ungrateful wretches, to let a ſtranger go away quietly, that

that has rifled you, and to bend all your ſpite againſt your maſter, who at this inſtant is beating his brains how he may repair your loſs and preſerve you.

MORAL.

People often miſtake their friends for their foes, and uſe them accordingly.

REFLECTION.

The miſtake of a friend for an enemy, or of an enemy for a friend, is one of the moſt pernicious errors of a raſh man's life; for there judgment, good-nature, generoſity, juſtice, common prudence, and all, are at ſtake. Nothing can be more diſobliging to a friend on the one hand, or more ruinous to one's ſelf on the other. And yet, in public caſes as well as in private, nothing is more frequent than for people to take their oppreſſors for their protectors, and their protectors for their oppreſſors; as the bees here ſpared the thief, and fell foul upon their keeper.

FAB. 132. A KINGSFISHER.

A KINGSFISHER built her neſt in a hollow bank by the river ſide, that ſhe might be out of the reach of the fowlers; and while ſhe happened to be foraging abroad for her young ones, a raging torrent waſhed away neſt, birds and all. Upon her return, finding how it was with her, ſhe broke out into this exclamation: Unhappy creature that I am! to fly from the bare apprehenſion of one enemy, into the mouth of another.

MORAL.

Many people apprehend danger where there is none, and fancy themſelves to be out of danger, where there is moſt of all.

REFLECTION.

No ſtate of life is ſo ſecure, as not to lie open to difficulties and dangers; and it is not poſſible for the wit of man to provide againſt all contingencies. There is no fence againſt inundations, earthquakes, hurricanes, peſtilential vapours, and the like; and therefore it is our part and duty to hope and endeavour the beſt, and at the ſame time to provide for the worſt that can befal us. That which cannot be helpt, muſt be borne.

FAB. 133. FISHING IN TROUBLED WATERS.

A FISHERMAN had ordered his net for a draught, and ſtill as he was gathering it up, he daſhed the water to fright the fiſh into the bag, Some of the neighbourhood, looking on, told him he did ill to muddle the water ſo, and ſpoil their drink. Well, ſays he, but I muſt either ſpoil your drink, or have nothing to eat myſelf.

MORAL.

It is an unhappy dilemma to which a man is driven, when his own neceſſary ſubſiſtence compels him to offend another.

REFLECTION.

How happy is the man, whoſe buſineſs as well as inclination makes him a benefit to the public! and who, at the ſame time that he is ſerving himſelf and family, is diſpenſing the means of a comfortable ſubſiſtence to all with whom he has any dealings! ſuch a one is a bleſſing to a commonwealth, and has abundant reaſon to thank Providence for ſo happy a lot.

FAB. 134. AN APE AND A DOLPHIN.

AN ape happened to be aboard a veſſel, which was caſt away in a very great ſtorm. As the men were paddling for their lives, and the ape for company, a dolphin taking him for a man, got him upon his back, and was making towards land with him. Being got with him into a ſafe road called the Pyræus, he aſked the ape, If he was an Athenian? He told him, Yes, and of a very ancient family there. Why then, ſays the dolphin, you know Pyræus. Oh! exceeding well, ſays the other, taking it for the name of a man: Why, Pyræus is my particular good friend. The dolphin, upon this, had ſuch an indignation for the impudence of the buffoon-ape, that he ſlipt from between his legs, and there was an end of the pretended Athenian.

MORAL.

Contempt, hazard, and infamy, are generally the deſerved lot of a detected impoſtor.

REFLECTION.

This is the humour of a great many travelling men, who will be talking of places they never ſaw, and of perſons

perſons they never heard of. Neither men, books, nor ſciences come amiſs to them: And after all this extravagant buſtle, a gay coat and a grimace is the upſhot of what they can pretend to. Theſe phantoms, however, are ſometimes taken for men, and borne up by the well-meaning ignorant common people, as the ape was here by the dolphin, till in the concluſion their ſupporters give them the ſlip, and down they drop and vaniſh. How many of theſe empty chattering ſops have we daily put upon us for men of ſenſe and buſineſs; that, with Balzac's prime miniſter, ſhall ſpend ye eight-and-forty hours together poring over a map, to look for *ariſtocracy* and *democracy*, inſtead of Croatia and Dalmatia, and take for the name of a country a form of government!

FAB. 135. MERCURY AND A STATUARY.

MERCURY, in order to know what credit he had in the world, put on the ſhape of a man, and away he went to the houſe of a famous ſtatuary, where he cheapened a Jupiter, and then a Juno. The carver told him the reſpective prices, which were eaſy enough: He then ſeeing a Mercury with all his ſymbols, Here am I, ſaid he to himſelf, in the quality of Jupiter's meſſenger, and the patron of artizans, with all my trade about me: And now will this fellow aſk me fifteen times as much for this, as he did for the others; and ſo he put it to him, what he valued that piece at: Why, truly, ſays the ſtatuary, you ſeem to be a civil gentleman; give me but my price for the other two, and you ſhall have that into the bargain.

MORAL.

The vanity of thoſe men ſeldom fails of a rebuff, who lay ſnares to come at other peoples opinion of them.

REFLECTION.

All vain men who affect popularity, are apt to fancy, that other people have the ſame opinion of them that they have of themſelves; but nothing goes nearer the heart of them, than to meet with contempt inſtead of applauſe, eſteem, and reputation.

FAB. 136.

FAB. 136. A HOUND AND A MASTIFF.

A MAN had two dogs; one for the chase, the other to look to the house; and whatever the hound took abroad, the house-dog had his part of it at home. The other grumbled at it, that when he took all the pains, the mastiff should reap the fruit of his labours. Ay, but says the house-dog, you ought to consider, that while you are purveying abroad for our master's pleasure, and your own profit as well as mine, I protect the house for the good of all.

MORAL.

Different persons in a commonwealth, as also in a great family, have different employments; and though some may be more laborious than others, yet they are all equally useful in a wise economy, as well to the principal, as to one another.

REFLECTION.

This fable will serve for a political reading to princes and governors, as well as to masters of private families, upon the reciprocal use, benefit, and necessity of industry and protection betwixt rulers and subjects, for the preservation of a commonwealth; as also betwixt one degree of servants and another, for the general benefit of all. The one supplies us with what we want, and the other supports us in the defence of what we get; and neither would signify any thing to us without the other.

FAB. 137. A WOLF AND A KID.

A WOLF pursued a straggling kid, which, finding no way to escape, turned and said, I perceive I am to be eaten, and I would die as pleasantly as I could: Wherefore pray give me one song before I die. The wolf began to howl by way of singing, and the noise brought the dogs in upon him. Well, says the wolf, this it is when people will be meddling out of their profession. My business was to play the butcher, and not to ape Farinelli.

MORAL.

Let every one stick to his own part, and act within his own proper sphere.

REFLECTION.

REFLECTION.

No man ought to presume too much upon his own strength, either of body or of mind; but consider within himself that Heaven takes part with the oppressed; and that tyrants themselves are upon their behaviour to a superior power. An innocent helpless kid may happen to be too hard for a rapacious devouring wolf; and a bad man, when he thinks himself most secure, may happen to be most in danger; and find all his wicked machinations against others turned upon himself.

FAB. 138. A CONCEITED MUSICIAN.

A MAN who had a very coarse voice, but an excellent music-room, would be still practising in that chamber, for the advantage of the echo. He admired himself so much upon it, that he must needs be shewing his parts upon a public theatre, where he performed so very ill, that the auditory threw stones at him, and hissed him off the stage.

MORAL.

Men are apt to be partial in their own favour; but there is no true reading of ourselves but with other mens eyes.

REFLECTION.

There is a great difference betwixt an orator in the schools, and a man of business upon a stage of action. Many a man who passes well enough in private, behaves himself most ridiculously in public. There are flattering chambers as well as flattering glasses; and the one helps out a bad voice, as the other countenances an ill-favoured face; that is to say, the one drowns the harshness of the pipe, as the other disguises the coarseness of the complexion. But men must not think to walk upon these stilts, if they come to set up in public once; the one, for an Italian capon; the other, for an English beauty: Wherefore it will become all people to weigh and measure themselves, before they venture upon any undertaking that may bring their lives, honour, or fortune in question.

FAB. 139. THIEVES AND A COCK.

A BAND of thieves broke into a houſe once, and found nothing in it to carry away, but one poor cock. The cock ſaid as much for himſelf as a cock could ſay; but inſiſted chiefly upon the ſervices of his calling people up to their work, when it was time to riſe. Sirrah, ſays one of the thieves, you had better let that argument alone; for your waking the family ſpoils our trade; and we are to be hanged, forſooth, for your bawling, are we?

MORAL.

That which is a good argument to an honeſt man, is not ſo to a thief.

REFLECTION.

A cuſtom-houſe officer in the power of ſmugglers, or a thief-catcher in the hands of robbers, would either of them make a very ill plea for himſelf, to ſet forth how uſeful he was by his profeſſion to the honeſt part of the world. It is well worthy of a ſober man's care not to let any thing fall that may be turned upon him out of his own mouth.

FAB. 140. A CROW AND A DOG.

A CROW on a time ſacrificing to Minerva, ſays a dog to him, In vain you pray to the goddeſs; for ſhe has ſuch an averſion to you, that you are particularly excluded out of all augeries. Ay, ſays the crow, but I will ſacrifice the rather to her for that, to try if I can make her my friend.

MORAL.

Men often take up religion more for fear, reputation, and intereſt, than for true affection. So the poor blinded Indians are ſaid to worſhip the devil, that he may not hurt them.

REFLECTION.

This Pagan fable will bear a ſtill more Chriſtian moral; for it may teach us, that we are not to take pet or deſpond, under any croſs or calamity which the Almighty is pleaſed to lay upon us. The judgments of Heaven are juſt, and let them fall never ſo heavy, they are yet leſs than we deſerve. Reſignation and perſeverance are all that a man has to truſt to in this extre-



To face p. 109.

Fab. 141. Raven & Snake. 109.



142. Wolf & Sheep. P. 109.



143. Hares Foxes & Eagles. 110.



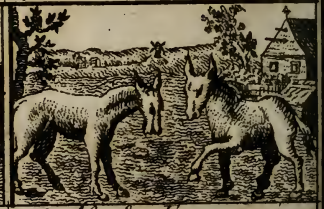
144 Man turn'd Vermine. 110.



145. Men & Wreck. P. 111.



146. A Wild & tame Ass. 112.



147. Asses Petition Jupiter. 113.



148. Ass & Frogs. 114.



149. Galld Ass & Raven. 116.



160. Lion Ass & Fox. 116.



extremity. There is no good to be done by ſtruggling or murmuring againſt them, nor any way left us to make our peace, but to try by faith, prayer, and a new life, if we can make our offended maſter once again our friend. So that, upon the whole, afflictions are but the methods of a merciful Providence, to force us upon the only means of ſetting matters right betwixt divine juſtice and human frailty.

FAB. 141. A RAVEN AND A SNAKE.

AS a ſnake lay lazying at his length, in the gleam of the ſun, a raven took him up, and flew away with him. The ſnake kept twiſting and turning, till he mortally bit the raven; and then the unhappy bird blamed himſelf for being ſuch a fool, as to meddle with a purchaſe that coſt him his life.

MORAL.

Nature has made all the neceſſaries of life ſafe and eaſy to us; but if we will be hankering after things that we neither want nor underſtand, we muſt take our fortune, let what will be the event.

REFLECTION.

It is much the ſame thing betwixt us and our ſenſual acquiſitions, that it is betwixt the raven and the ſnake. Men of eager appetites chop at what comes next, and the purchaſe ſeldom fails of a ſting in the tail of it. Nor is it to be expected that paſſion without reaſon ſhould ſucceed better. Our ſenſes are ſharpſet upon all fleſhly pleaſures; and if they be but fair to the eye, reliſhing to the palate, harmonious to the ear, gentle to the touch, and fragrant to the ſmell, it is all we look for, and all we care for. But in the end we are frequently made ſenſible of our miſtake, and that our conſideration ought to have gone deeper than mere outſide appearances.

FAB. 142. A WOLF AND A SHEEP.

A WOLF bit by a dog lay licking of his wounds; and being extremely faint and ill upon it, called out to a ſheep that was paſſing by: Hark ye, friend, ſays he, if thou wouldſt but help me to a ſup of water out of the ſame brook there, I could make a ſhift to get myſelf ſomewhat to eat. Yes, ſays the ſheep, I

make no doubt of it; for you intend to make him that brings you drink, find you meat into the bargain; and and my slaughtered carcase will pay for all.

MORAL.

Civilities and good offices to cruel and ungrateful men are dangerous. That sheep has a fine time of it, that runs upon a wolf's errand.

REFLECTION.

There is no trusting to the fair words and appearances of a false and malicious enemy; for his very kindnesses are no better than snares. Treachery is equally odious both to God and man, and it has this bad effect, that it corrupts our manners, hardens our hearts, dissolves all the bonds of faith, confidence, and society, and extinguishes good-nature itself: And all this we are forced to give into our own defence, when we have to do with rapacious and treacherous men.

FAB. 143. HARES, FOXES, AND EAGLES.

THE hares were threatened with a bloody war by the eagles, and would fain have drawn the foxes into their alliance; but very frankly they gave them this answer, That they would serve them with all their hearts, if they did not perfectly understand both the hares themselves, and the enemy they were to cope withal.

MORAL.

There is no entering into any league, without well examining the faith and strength of the parties to it.

REFLECTION.

The end of leagues is common assistance and defence; and he that joins interest with those that cannot help him, stands as single as he did before; which destroys the end of a common union; for where there is no hope of a reciprocal aid, there can be no reason for the mutual obligation; and it is the same thing in business, counsel, and commerce, that it is in arms and force.

FAB. 144. A MAN TURNED INTO A PISMIRE.

A COVETOUS husbandman, who was continually filching away his neighbours goods and corn, and stored all up in his own barn, drew down a curse upon his head

head for it; and Jupiter, as a punishment, turned him into a pismire: But this change of shape wrought no alteration, either of mind or of manners; for he kept the same humour and nature still.

MORAL.

Custom is a second nature; and when wicked inclinations come to be habitual, the evil is desperate; for nature will be true to herself through all manner of forms and disguises.

REFLECTION.

By the poetical fictions of men turned into the shape of beasts and insects, we are given to understand, that they do effectually make themselves so, when they degenerate from the dignity of their kind: So that the metamorphosis is in their manners, not in their figure. When a reasonable soul descends to keep company in the dirt with ants and beetles, and to abandon the whole man to the sensuality of brutal satisfactions, he forfeits the very privilege of his character and creation; for he is no longer a man, that gives himself wholly up to the works of a beast.

FAB. 145. MEN AND A SUPPOSED SEA-WRECK.

A COMPANY of people walking upon the sea-shore, saw somewhat come hulling towards them a great way off at sea. First they took it for a great ship, then a little one, and as it came still nearer, for a boat only: But it proved at last to be no more than a float of weeds and rushes. Whereupon they made this reflection among themselves, We have been waiting here for a mighty business, truly, which at last comes to just nothing at all!

MORAL.

We are apt to be led away by the distant appearance of things, of which, when brought home to us, we see the vanity and emptiness.

REFLECTION.

The dangers that we apprehend, and the blessings we hope for, look generally a great deal bigger, and more considerable at a distance, than they really are. For mankind is almost continually deceived by its hopes and fears. Things at hand we see as they really are; far off, as they only seem to be; and our imaginations

being set on work, make oftentimes mountains of mole-hills. Patience and consideration only, in all such cases, are able to set our judgments right. This fable, as we have taken notice in the life of Æsop, was very fatal to that excellent man. He had been induced to visit Delphos, by the fame of its oracle, and the reputation which that had given to the people of the island, of whom he had conceived a mighty opinion: But when he came thither, he found them very much the contrary of what he expected; and that, instead of being a wise, a moral, and a generous people, they were given up to their vices and follies; and were selfish, vain, luxurious, and conceited; so that he could not refrain letting them know by this fable how much he was disappointed; and they never left till they had plotted away his life, for fear he should inspire into others the bad opinion he had found reason to entertain of them himself.

FAB. 146. A WILD ASS AND A TAME.

AS a tame ass was airing himself in a pleasant meadow, with a coat and a carcase in very good plight, up comes a wild one to him from the next wood, with this short greeting: Brother, says he, I envy your happiness. And so he left him. It was his hap, some short time after, to see his tame brother groaning under an unmerciful pack, and a fellow at his heels goading him forward. He rounds him in the ear upon it: My friend, says he, your condition is not, I perceive, what I took it to be; for I would not purchase your sleek coat and plump carcase at so dear a rate as this.

MORAL.

Betwixt envy and ingratitude we make ourselves twice miserable; out of an opinion, first, that our neighbour has too much; and secondly, that we ourselves have too little.

REFLECTION.

There is no such thing as happiness or misery in this world (commonly so reputed) but by comparison; neither is there any man so miserable as not to be happy, or so happy as not to be miserable, in some respect or other: Only we are apt to envy our neighbours the possession

poſſeſſion of thoſe advantages which we want, without ever giving thanks for the bleſſings which they want, and we ourſelves enjoy. Now this mixture in the diſtributions of Providence, duly conſidered, ſerves to make us eaſy, as well as neceſſary one to another; and ſo to unite us in a conſiſtence both of friendſhip, and of civil convenience. Every thing is beſt, in fine, as God has made it, and where God has placed it. The tame aſs wrought hard for his fine coat, and the wild one fared hard, to balance the comfort of his freedom.

FAB. 147. ASSES PETITION JUPITER.

THE aſſes, on a time, joined in a petition to Jupiter, to eaſe them of their heavy burdens, and arbitrary maſters. Jupiter gave them this anſwer, That the order of the world could not be preſerved without burdens being carried ſome way or other: But that, ſince they were ſo diſſatisfied with their lot, if they would but join and piſs up a river, that the burdens which they now carried by land might be carried by water, they ſhould be eaſed of a conſiderable part of that grievance. This ſet them all at work immediately; and the humour, ſay the Mythologiſts, is kept up to this day, that whenever one aſs begins, the reſt piſs for company.

MORAL.

Every man thinks his own lot hardeſt; but it becomes us to reſt ſatisfied with the deſignations of Providence, and to be contented with the condition in which God has placed us.

REFLECTION.

The aſſes are here complaining for being put to the very uſe and buſineſs they were made for; as if it were cruelty and oppreſſion to employ the neceſſary means, which God and nature has given us, for the attaining of neceſſary ends. If we confound higher and lower, the world is a chaos again, and a level. Is not a labourer as neceſſary an implement of Providence as the maſter-builder? Are not the meaneſt artificers of the ſame inſtitution with miniſters of counſel and ſtate? The head can no more be without the body, than the body without the head; and neither of them

without hands to defend, and provide both for the one and for the other. Government can no more subsist without subjection, than the multitude can agree without government: And the duty of obeying is no less necessary to public order, than the authority of commanding.

What would become of the universe, if there were not servants as well as masters? Beasts to draw, and carry burdens, as well as burdens to be drawn and carried? If there were not instruments for drudgery, as well as offices of drudgery? If there were not people to receive and execute orders, as well as others to give and authorize them.

Jupiter's answer most emphatically sets forth the necessity of discharging the asses part, and the vanity of proposing to have it done any other way. As who should say, The business of human nature must be done. Lay your heads together, and if you can find any way for the doing it, without one sort of people under another, you shall have your asking. But for a conclusion, He that is born to work, is out of his place and element when he is idle.

FAB. 148. AN ASS AND THE FROGS.

An ass once sunk down into a bog among a shoal of frogs, with a burden of wood upon his back; and there he lay, sighing and groaning, as if his heart would break: Hark ye, friend, says one of the frogs to him, if you make such a business of a quagmire, when you are but just fallen into it, what ought we to do, who find at least a hundred of our nearest relations crushed to death by your unwieldy weight? For shame, don't lie groaning here; but redouble your efforts, and free us and yourself from a condition that is equally dangerous to both.

MORAL.

Smaller evils are borne with less impatience, when we see our neighbours suffering under much greater. In any misfortune that befals us, we should use our best resolution to extricate ourselves from it, and not, by vain and fruitless complaints, aggravate the evil.

REFLECTION.

The fable may ſerve to teach us, that it is a high point of honour and Chriſtianity, to bear misfortunes with reſolution and conſtancy of mind; and that ſteadineſs is a point of prudence, as well as of courage; for people are the lighter and the eaſier for it. It is with a man in a goal much at the rate as it was with this aſs in the bog. He is ſullen, and out of humour, at his firſt coming in; the priſoners gather about him, and there he tells them his caſe over and over, I warrant ye. Some make ſport with him, others pity him, and this is the trade they drive for the firſt four or five days perhaps; but ſo ſoon as the qualm is over, and he ſees others in as bad, or perhaps a worſe condition than himſelf, the man comes to himſelf again; makes merry with his companions; and ſince he cannot be in his own houſe, he reckons himſelf as good as at home in the very priſon. It is the ſame thing with a bird in a cage; when ſhe has fluttered herſelf weary, ſhe ſits down and ſings. This it is to be accuſtomed to a thing. But theſe caſes, however, differ ſomewhat from that of the aſs; he could not propoſe to live with his burden on his back in a bog? what was he to do then? Why, inſtead of groaning and making fruitleſs complaints, he was to exert himſelf, and redouble his efforts, to get free from his embarraſſment, and ſo put himſelf in a condition to purſue his journey.

FAB. 149. A GALLED ASS AND RAVEN.

AS an aſs with a galled back was feeding in a meadow, a raven pitched upon him, and there ſat, jobbing of the ſore. The aſs fell a friſking and braying upon it; which ſet a groom, who ſaw it at a diſtance, a laughing at it. Well! ſays a wolf that was paſſing by, and thought the raven was devouring the aſs, to ſee the injuſtice of the world now! A poor wolf, in that raven's place, would have been hunted to death preſently; and it is made only a laughing-matter in the raven.

MORAL.

Our partiality and ignorance often lead us into miſtakes, and cauſe us to make wrong inferences and concluſions.

REFLEC-

REFLECTION.

The groom's laughing at the gambols of the ass, informs us, that there are many cases which make people laugh without pleasing them; as when the surprize or caprice of some fantastical accident happens to strike the fancy: Nay, a man cannot forbear laughing sometimes, when he is yet heartily sorry for the thing he laughs at; which is, in truth, but an extravagant motion, which never comes near the heart. Wherefore the wolf was out in his surmise, when he called it a laughing-matter; besides, that he should have distinguished upon the disproportion betwixt the worrying of a wolf and the pecking of a raven; that is to say, betwixt a certain death on the one hand, and only a vexatious importunity on the other.

FAB. 150. A LION, ASS, AND FOX.

An ass and a fox, upon the ramble together, met a lion by the way. The fox's heart went pit-a-pat; but however, to make the best of a bad game, up he goes to the lion, Sir, says he, I am come to offer your majesty a piece of service, and I'll cast myself upon your honour for my own security. If you have a mind to my companion the ass here, it is but a word speaking, and you shall have him immediately. Let it be done, then, says the lion. So the fox trepanned the ass into a pit; and the lion, when he found he had him sure, begun with the fox himself; and after that, for his second course, went down into the pit, and made up his meal out of the other. But before he himself could get out of the pit, some men on the hunt for game, shot the lion through the heart with their arrows.

MORAL.

Bad princes love the treason, but hate the traitor: And he who encourages one piece of treachery, not only practises, but promotes another; and lays the foundation of a doctrine, which often comes home to himself in the end.

REFLECTION.

This fable advises every man to be sure of knowing his company, before he embarks with them in any great matter; though he that betrays his companion,

Fig. 151. Hen & Swallow. P. 117.



152. Pigeon & Picture. 11



153. Pigeon & Crow. P. 119.



154. Jupiter & Herdsma



155. Gnat & Lion. P. 121.



156. Lion & Frog. 121.



157. Peacock & Magpye. 122.



158. Lion &c Hunting. 123



159. Wolf & Kid. P. 124.



160. Jupiter & Ass. 124.



nion, has the fortune commonly to be betrayed himſelf.

Here is the folly of the aſs in truſting the fox, whom he knew to be a treacherous companion; and here is the knavery of the fox in betraying the aſs, which was but according to his nature. Now this does not hinder yet, but that the lion forfeited a point of honour in the worrying of him: And this fiction, throughout, is but the emblem of things that are familiar to us in the world. The lion might have been allowed an averſion to the fox as a perfidious creature; but the devouring of him upon theſe terms was another treachery in himſelf. Now if he had ſpared the aſs for his ſimplicity, and puniſhed the fox for his perfidy, the proceeding might have had ſome ſemblance of a generous equity: But an honourable mind will ſcorn to make advantage of a treacherous inſtrument: that is to ſay, by aſſenting to the treachery: So that the moral ſeems to carry more force with this bias. Upon the whole matter, the ſilly aſs pays dear for the credulity and folly of keeping ill company; the fox is met withal in his own way for breaking the faith of ſociety; and the lion meets with his juſt reward for encouraging the fox's treachery; and yet, when he had thrown himſelf upon his honour, deſtroying him. In ſhort, the fox deſerved to be puniſhed for his perfidy to the aſs; but he did not deſerve it at the paws of the lion. This fable, upon the whole, is a figure of a wicked governor, following the advice of as wicked a miniſter, whom he ſacrifices when his ſervices are over; and the puniſhment of the lion ſhews us the deſerved fate that often attends ſuch tyrannical princes; who, after having made a hundred ſacrifices to their cruelty, intereſt, or ambition, often periſh themſelves when they leaſt expect it, and, happen when it will, are ſure of falling unpitied by all mankind.

FAB. 151. A HEN AND A SWALLOW.

A FOOLISH hen ſat brooding upon a neſt of ſerpent's eggs. A ſwallow obſerving it, told her the danger of it, and that ſhe was hatching her own deſtruction: But the hen not heeding the advice, perſiſted

sisted in her folly, and the end verified the swallow's prediction.

MORAL.

It is the hard fortune of many a good-natured man to breed up a bird to pick out his own eyes, *in despite of all cautions to the contrary.*

REFLECTION.

This is the case of many people in the world, who spend their time in good offices for others, to the utter ruin of themselves: They who want foresight, should do well to hearken to good counsel. He who thinks to oblige hard-hearted people by an officious tenderness, and to fare the better himself for putting it into their power to hurt him, will find only so much time, pains, and good-will, utterly cast away, at the foot of his account. It is good, however, to hope and to presume the best, provide a man be prepared for the worst. The mistake lies in this, that the charity begins abroad, which ought to begin at home. They who cannot see into the end of things, may well be at a loss in the reason of them; and a well-meaning piety is the destruction of many an honest man, who sits innocently brooding upon the projects of other people, though with the heart, all the while, of a true friend to the public. Tell him the consequences of matters, and that he is now hatching of serpents, not of chickens; a misguided zeal makes him deaf and blind to the true state and issue of things: He sits his time out, and what's the end of it, but the plot naturally discloses itself in his, and perhaps a more extensive ruin? The South-Sea Project, the Bank-Contract, the charitable Corporation Bubble, and twenty others that might be named in this age so fruitful of such projects, will afford numberless instances to justify this application.

FAB. 152. A PIGEON AND A PAINTER.

A PIGEON, seeing the picture of a glass with water in it, and taking it to be water indeed, flew rashly and eagerly to it, for a sup to quench her thirst. But stunning herself against the frame of the picture, she fell to the ground, and was taken up by the bye-standers, who instantly wrung her neck off.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Raſh men do many things in haſte, which they repent of at leiſure.

REFLECTION.

Moderation is a high point of wiſdom, and raſhneſs, on the other hand, is ever dangerous: For men are ſubject to be cozen'd with outward appearances, and ſo take the vain images and ſhadows of things for the ſubſtance. All violent paſſions have ſomewhat in them of the temerity of this pigeon; and if that raſhneſs be not as fatal in the one caſe, as this was in the other, it is a deliverance that we are more indebted for to the ſpecial grace of an over-ruling Providence, than to any thing of our own government and direction. One man may have the advantage of another in the benefit of a preſence of mind, which may ſerve, in a great meaſure, to fortify us againſt ſurprizes and difficulties not to be foreſeen: But a ſound judgment is the reſult of ſecond thoughts, upon due time and conſideration, which way to bring matters to a good iſſue. How many inſtances do we ſee daily of people who are hurried on, without either fear or wit, by love, hatred, envy, ambition or revenge, to their own ruin? Which comes to the very caſe of the pigeon's ſtunning herſelf againſt the picture, and the end is often as fatal.

FAB. 153. A PIGEON AND A CROW.

A PIGEON was bragging to a crow how fruitful ſhe was. Never value yourſelf, ſays the crow, upon that vanity; for as you bring up your young principally for the pot, the pye, or the ſpit, I ſhould think, that the more children you have the more ſhould be your ſorrow.

MORAL.

Children are called bleſſings; and they are truly ſuch when dutiful and hopeful, and attended with good fortune in the world; but otherwiſe they are the greateſt diſcomforts an indulgent parent can have.

REFLECTION.

The care, charge, and hazard of many children, in the education and proof of them, does in a great meaſure countervail the bleſſing; eſpecially where they are born

born in a ſtate of ſlavery, and their good depends upon the arbitrary pleaſure of a tyrant. The fable may be taken in another ſenſe, to ſhew us the hazard of having a numerous ſtock of children, which muſt of neceſſity, whether they live or die, furniſh matter of great anxiety to the parents. The loſs of them is grievous to us. The miſcarriage of them by falling into lewd and vicious courſes, is much worſe; and one ſuch diſappointment is ſufficient to blaſt the comfort given us by all the reſt. Nay, the very poſſibility, or rather the likelihood and odds, that ſome out of ſuch a number will prove ungracious, makes our beds uneaſy to us, fills our heads and our hearts with carking thoughts, and keep us in anxiety night and day.

FAB. 154. JUPITER AND A HERDSMAN.

A HERDSMAN, who had loſt a calf out of his grounds, when he could get no tidings of it betook himſelf at laſt to his prayers: Great Jupiter, ſays he, do but ſhew me the thief who ſtole my calf, and I'll give thee a kid for a ſacrifice. The word was no ſooner paſſed, but the thief appeared; which was indeed a lion. This put him to his prayers once again. I have not forgotten my vow, ſays he; but now thou haſt brought me to the thief, I'll make that kid a bull, if thou wilt but ſet me quit of him again.

MORAL.

We cannot be too careful and conſiderate what vows and promiſes we make; for the very granting of our prayers would turn many times to utter ruin.

REFLECTION.

Men ſhould conſider well beforehand what they promiſe, what they vow, and what they wiſh for, leſt they ſhould be taken at their words, and afterward repent. We make it half our buſineſs to compaſs thoſe things, which when we come to underſtand, and to have in our poſſeſſion, we would give the world to be rid of again. Wherefore he that moderates his deſires, and reſigns himſelf in all events to the good pleaſure of Providence, ſucceeds beſt in the government of his fortune, life, and manners.

FAB. 155. A GNAT AND A LION.

AS a lion was bluſtering in the foreſt, up comes a gnat to his very beard, and challenges him to a ſingle combat. The challenge was accepted, and the gnat charged into the noſtrils of the lion, and there twinged him, till he made him tear himſelf with his own paws, and at laſt to run away. The gnat with no little pride, flew away; but as he was glorying in his victory, he ſtruck into a cobweb, and fell a prey to a pitiful ſpider. The diſgrace went to the heart of him, after he had got the better of a lion, to be worſted by ſuch an inſect.

MORAL.

It is in the power of Providence to humble the pride of the mighty, even by the moſt deſpicable means; wherefore let no creature, how great or how little ſoever, preſume on the one ſide, or deſpair on the other.

REFLECTION.

There is nothing either ſo great, or ſo little, as not to be liable to the viciſſitudes of fortune, whether for good or for evil. A miſerable fly is ſufficient, we ſee, to take down the pride of a lion; and then to correct the inſulting vanity of that fly, it falls the next moment into the toil of a ſpider. It is highly improvident not to obviate ſmall things; and as ridiculous to be baffled by them: The very teazing of the gnat galled the lion as much as an arrow at his heart would have done. The doctrine is this, that no man is to preſume upon his power and greatneſs, when every pitiful creature may find out a way to diſcompoſe him. But that mean wretch is not to value himſelf upon his victory neither; for the gnat that had the better of the lion, the very next moment was enſnared by a ſpider.

FAB. 156. A LION AND A FROG.

A LION raging about for prey, ſtarted all of a ſudden at a ſtrange noiſe he heard; but as he was looking about, preparing for an encounter with ſome terrible monſter, what ſhould he ſee but a pitiful frog come crawling out from the ſide of a pond! And is this all? ſays the lion; and ſo betwixt ſhame and indignation, vowed never to

give way for the future to a terror, which had no better ground than a weak imagination.

MORAL.

'Firſt motions *are hard to be reſiſted; but a wiſe man will arm himſelf againſt imaginary dangers; and not ſuffer himſelf to be diſturbed by little ſurpriſes and apprehenſions.*

REFLECTION.

No man living can be ſo preſent to himſelf, as not to be put beſide his ordinary temper upon ſome accidents or occaſions; but then his philoſophy brings him to a right underſtanding of things, and his reſolution carries him through all difficulties. The lion in the fable was not proof againſt a ſudden alarm, though it proceeded but from a wretched frog: Which ſhews how apt even the ſtrongeſt minds are ſometimes to be tranſported with the vain opinion and falſe images of things, which are no ſooner underſtood, than deſpiſed by a truly brave and wiſe man.

FAB. 157. A PEACOCK AND MAGPYE.

THE birds being aſſembled to chooſe a king, were ſo taken with the gaudy appearance of a ſtrutting peacock, that they were inclinable to make choice of him. The magpye hereupon deſired the aſſembly to conſider what they were about: For if, ſays he, the eagle, the vulture, or the hawk ſhould invade us, what aſſiſtance can we hope for from the peacock? This being duly weighed by the reſt, they changed their minds, and made another choice.

MORAL.

A gaudy outſide ſo generally indicates an empty mind, that wiſe men will never be miſled by it.

REFLECTION.

In popular elections, from a chief governor, down to repreſentatives in parliament, and lower ſtill, to the little officers in a country borough, perſons are to be rejected who would principally recommend themſelves by noiſy pretences, or vain boaſts, and mere outward appearance. The worthy man, conſcious of his own merit, is contented to adorn his mind, and makes his chief reliance on the capacity which that gives him of ſerving his

his electors; while the fluttering fop, ſtrutting like a peacock, puts all his confidence in his gay outſide and ſplendid equipage; and hints to them by a too natural implication, what muſt be the iſſue of chooſing a perſon, who wants the luxury of his appearance, and his ſtrutting vanity, to be ſupported; and that, perhaps, at the expence of the very people who chooſe him; and who has neither parts nor capacity to do them real ſervice, had he the inclination or power.

FAB. 158. A LION, ASS, AND FOX A-HUNTING.

In a hunting match agreed upon betwixt a lion, an aſs, and a fox, who were to go equal ſhares in the booty, they ran down a brave ſtag, and the aſs was to divide the prey; which he did very innocently into three equal parts, and left the lion to take his choice; who never minded the dividend, but in a rage worried the aſs, and then bade the fox divide. He thruſt all the three parts together, and made but one ſhare of the whole, reſerving only a few of the entrails for himſelf. The lion highly approved of his way of diſtribution: But prithee, Reynard, ſays he, who taught thee to carve? Why truly, ſays the fox, I had the aſs before me for my maſter.

MORAL.

The folly of one man makes another man wiſe; as one man grows frequently rich upon the ruins of another.

REFLECTION.

Experience is the miſtreſs of knaves, as well as of fools. We ought to take care how we are concerned with thoſe who are mightier than ourſelves. It is a folly to contend with ſuperior power, when, be its point what it will, it is determined to carry it. A certain courtier, within our memory, ſays to an humble ſuitor, who had been a principal ſtep in the ladder of his preferment, My dear friend, I ſhall never have it in my power to diſcharge the obligations I owe you: But think of ſomething in which I may be of ſervice to you. The honeſt man caſts about, and fixes upon an hopeful reverſionary grant, and begs his intereſt for it. It is mighty well, ſays he; you ſhall ſee how readily I will ſerve you!—And he ſerves him like a true cour-

tier indeed: For after ſeveral delays, he tells him it was too conſiderable a thing for him, as he found upon inquiry; he therefore muſt think of ſomething elſe, and in the mean time procures the other for his ſon. This is in ſome meaſure acting the part of the lion in the fable, who engroſſed all the booty to himſelf. The only difference is, the courtier *made* an aſs, and the lion *killed* one. But nevertheleſs the ſtrongeſt took all the benefit to himſelf in both caſes. Though this fable is of pretty near the ſame import with FAB. 7. yet as it differs in ſome particulars, we thought we ought not to omit it.

FAB. 159. A WOLF AND A KID.

A WOLF paſſing by a poor country cottage, was eſpied by a kid through a peeping-hole in the door; who ſent a hundred curſes along with him. Sirrah, ſays the wolf, if I had you out of your caſtle, I would make you give better language.

MORAL.

Security and protection will make a coward give defiance to a hero.

REFLECTION.

There is nothing ſo courageous as a coward, if you put him out of danger. This way of brawl, ſcurrility, and clamour is ſo arrant a mark of a daſtardly ſpirit, that he who uſes it, when he knows he is ſafe from the reſentment of the perſon he abuſes, ſufficiently proclaims his own character.

FAB. 160. JUPITER AND AN ASS.

A GARDENER'S aſs, which did a great deal of work for a very little meat, prayed for another maſter. Jupiter turned him over to a potter, where he found clay and tile ſo much a heavier burden than roots and cabbage, that he went to prayers once again for another change. His next maſter was a tanner, and there his grievances were ſtill heightened. For, ſays he, I have been only pinched in my fleſh, and rib-roaſted ſometimes, under my former maſters; but beſides that I have the ſame cauſes of complaint under this, I find a worſe ſuperadded; for now I am in for it ſkin and all.

MORAL.

MORAL.

A man who is ever shifting and changing, is not, in truth, so weary of his condition, as of himself; and he that still carries about him the plague of a restless mind, can never be pleased.

REFLECTION.

It is a high point of prudence for any man to be content with his lot. For it is forty to one but he that changes his condition, out of a present impatience and dissatisfaction, when he has tried a new one, wishes for his old one again. Those people, in fine, who are destined to drudgery, may change their masters, but not their condition.

It is not for a wise and honest man to stand expostulating with the nature of things. As for instance, Why should not I be this or that, or be so or so, as well as he or the other? But I should rather say to myself after this manner: Am not I the creature of an Almighty Power? And is not the same Power and Wisdom that made and ordered the world, that has assigned me this place, rank, or station in it? This body, this soul, this every thing? What I am, I must be, and there is no contending with invincible necessity; no disputing with an incomprehensible Wisdom: If I can mend my condition by any warrantable industry and virtue, the way is fair and open; and that is a privilege that every reasonable creature has in his commission; but without fixing upon some certain scope, and prescribing just and honourable ways to it, there is nothing to be done. It is a wicked thing to repine; and it is as bootless and uneasy too; for one restless thought begets and punishes another. We are not so miserable in our own wants, as in what others enjoy: And then our levity is as great a plague to us as our envy; so that we need nothing more than we have, but thankfulness and submission, to make us happy. It was not the ground of the ass's complaint, that it was worse with him than with other asses, but because he was an ass: And he was not so sick of his master, as of his work. His fortune was well enough for such an animal, so long as he kept himself within his proper sphere and business: but if the stones in the wall will be taking upon them to reproach the builder; and if no-

thing will pleaſe people unleſs they be greater than Nature ever intended them; what can they expect, but the aſs's round of vexatious changes and experiments; and at laſt, when they have made themſelves weary and ridiculous, be even glad to ſet up their reſt upon the very ſpot where they ſtarted?

FAB. 161. A WOMAN AND HER MAIDS.

It was the way of a good houſewifely old woman to call up her maids every morning juſt at the cock-crowing. The wenches were loth to riſe ſo ſoon, and ſo they laid their heads together, and killed the poor cock: For, ſay they, if it were not for his waking our dame, ſhe would not wake us: But when the good woman's cock was gone, ſhe would miſtake the hour many times, and call them up at midnight: So that inſtead of mending the matter, they found themſelves in a worſe condition than before.

MORAL.

One error makes way for another. Firſt we complain of ſmall things: Then we ſhift, and inſtead of mending the matter, we find it worſe, till it comes at laſt to the tinker's work of ſtopping one hole, and making ten.

REFLECTION.

It is a common thing for people that are uneaſy, to fly to remedies worſe than the diſeaſe; wherefore men ſhould deliberate before they reſolve; and ſay to themſelves, This we ſuffer at preſent; and this or that we propoſe to get by ſuch and ſuch a change; and ſo ſet the one againſt the other. The wenches were called up too early, they thought; and ſo for fear of having too little ſleep, they ran the riſque of having none at all.

FAB. 162. AN EAGLE AND AN OWL.

A royal eagle having reſolved to prefer ſuch of his ſubjects as he found moſt agreeable for perſon and addreſs, ordered every bird to bring its young ones to court. They came accordingly, and every one in its turn was for advancing its own; till at laſt the owl fell a mopping and twinkling, and told his majeſty, That if a graceful mien and countenance might intitle any of his ſubjects to a preference, ſhe doubted not but her brood

brood would be looked upon in the firſt place; for, ſays ſhe, they are all as like me as they can ſtare.

MORAL.

Self-love is the root of all the vanity that is ſtruck at in this fable, and it is ſo natural an infirmity, that it makes us partial even to thoſe that come of us, as well as ourſelves: According to the proverb, Every bird thinks her own the faireſt.

REFLECTION.

The moral here before us extends to the fruits and productions of the brain, as well as of the body; and to deformities as well of underſtanding, as of ſhape. We are taught here principally two things: Firſt, how ridiculous it is for a man to dote upon the undeſerving iſſue of his own brains or loins; and yet, Secondly, how prone we are to indulge our own errors, follies, and miſcarriages, in thought, word, and deed. The world has abundance of theſe owls in it: So that whoever looks about him, will find not a few living illuſtrations of this emblem.

FAB. 163. AN OAK AND A WILLOW.

In a controverſy between an oak and a willow, the oak upbraided the willow that it was weak and wavering, and gave way to every blaſt; while he ſcorned, he ſaid, to bend to the moſt raging tempeſts, which he deſpiſed as they whiſtled by him. Some very little while after this diſpute it blew a moſt violent ſtorm. The willow plied and gave way to the guſt, and ſtill recovered itſelf again, without receiving any damage; but the oak, ſtubbornly reſiſting the hurricane, was torn up by the roots.

MORAL.

A ſtiff and a ſtubborn obſtinacy is not ſo much firmneſs and reſolution, as wilfulneſs. A wiſe man will yield to the neceſſity of his affairs, and of the times, in all honeſt caſes, rather than expoſe himſelf and family to inevitable ruin.

REFLECTION.

There are many caſes and many ſeaſons, wherein men muſt either bend or break: But conſcience, honour, and good manners, are firſt to be conſulted. When a tree is preſſed with a ſtrong wind, the branches may yield

yield, and yet the root remain firm. But discretion is to govern us, where and when we may be allowed to temporize, and where and when not. When bending or breaking is the question, and men have no other choice before them, than either of complying, or of being undone, it is no easy matter to distinguish, where, when, how, or to what degree, to yield to the importunity of the occasion, or the difficulty of the times. The first point, however, to be preserved sacred, and from whence a man is never to depart, though for the saving of his life, liberty, popular credit, or estate, is *conscience*. There are trials of men, as well as trials of trees: The iniquity of the age, or conjuncture, is to the one, what storms or inundations are to the other. Now it is not courage but obstinacy, in such as will rather choose to break than bend, where a yielding may be made with a good conscience. For men may be stiff and obstinate upon a wrong ground, as well as they may ply and truckle upon a false foundation. Our bodies may be forced, but our minds cannot: So that human frailty is no excuse for a criminal immorality. For where the law of God and nature obliges me, the plea of human frailty can never discharge me. There is as much difference betwixt bending and sinking, as there is betwixt breaking and bending. There must be no contending with insuperable powers on the one hand, and no departing from indespensable duties on the other: Nor is it the part, either of a Christian, or of a man, to abandon his post. Now the just medium of this case lies between the pride and the abjectness of the two extremes: As the willow, for instance, bends and recovers; while the stubborn and inflexible oak is torn up by the roots.

FAB. 164. ANTS AND A GRASSHOPPER.

AS the ants were airing their provisions one winter, a hungry grashopper begged a charity of them. They told him, that he should have wrought in summer, if he would not have wanted in winter. Well, says the grashopper, but I was not idle neither: for I sung out the whole season. Nay then, said they, you will e'en do well to make a merry year of it, and dance in winter to the tune that you sung in summer.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Action and industry is the business of a wise and good man, and nothing is so much to be despised as slothfulness. Go to the ant, thou sluggard! *says the royal Preacher*, consider her ways, and be wise; *which in a few words sums up the moral of this fable.*

REFLECTION.

It is hard to say of laziness or luxury, whether it be the more scandalous, or the more dangerous evil. The very soul of the slothful does but lie drowzing in his body, and the whole man is totally given up to his senses; whereas the profit and comfort of industry are substantial, firm and lasting; the blessings of security and plenty go along with it, and it is never out of season. What is the grasshopper's entertainment now, but a summer's song? A vain and an empty pleasure? Let it be understood, however, that we are not to pass avarice upon the world, under the title of good-husbandry and thrift, and thereby utterly to extinguish charity. We are indeed in the first place to consult our own necessities; but we are then to consider, in the second, that the necessities of our neighbours, have a Christian right to a part of what we have to spare.

The stress of this moral lies upon the preference of honest labour to idleness; and the refusal of relief on the one hand, is intended only for a reproof to the inconsiderate loss of opportunity on the other. This does not hinder yet, but that the ants, out of their abundance, ought to have relieved the grasshopper in her distress, though it was her own fault that brought her to it: For if one man's faults could discharge another man of his duty, there would be no longer any place left for the common offices of society. To conclude, We have our failings every one of us; and the improvidence of my neighbour must not make me inhuman. The ant did well to reprove the grasshopper for her slothfulness; but she did ill, after that, to refuse her a charity in her distress.

FAB. 165. A BULL AND A GOAT.

A BULL, hard preſſed by a lion, ran toward a goat-ſtall to ſave himſelf. The goat made good the door, and head to head diſputed the paſſage with him. Barbarous wretch, ſays the bull, how can you thus refuſe ſhelter to one in diſtreſs! I know well what I do, replied the goat: For would it not be high imprudence in me to give you entrance, and bring the lion upon my own back?

MORAL.

Though the duties of humanity oblige us to do all we can to aſſiſt a neighbour in diſtreſs, yet are we to take care by the rules of prudence not to ruin ourſelves and families for his ſake.

REFLECTION.

Self-preſervation is the firſt principle of nature; and the goat in the fable argues prudently enough, That he ought to oppoſe the entrance of the bull, leſt the lion at his heels ſhould fall upon himſelf, a ſtill weaker enemy. It is humane to ſuccour a friend in diſtreſs; and, if it can be done without great detriment to ourſelves, it is our duty, both as men and Chriſtians. But if the conſequences of the ſhelter we might give, as in caſes of treaſon, *&c.* ſhould expoſe us to inevitable deſtruction, and which might not neither mend the caſe of the diſtreſſed, we ought by all means to avoid ſo imminent a danger.

FAB. 166. A NURSE AND FROWARD CHILD.

A WOLF prowling about for his ſupport, paſſed by a door where a little child was bawling, and a nurſe chiding it. Leave your vixen tricks, ſays the woman, or I'll throw you to the wolf. The wolf hearing this, waited a pretty while, in hopes the woman would be as good as her word. But the child being frighted into better temper, the tone was turned, and he had the mortification to hear the nurſe ſay, That's a good dear! If the wolf comes for my child, we'll e'en beat his brains out. Upon which the wolf went muttering away as faſt as he could.

MORAL.

MORAL.

An ingenious spirit will be wrought upon by fair words; but a perverse one must be terrified into its duty, if soft means will not do.

REFLECTION.

Terrors are as necessary to quiet froward spirits, as praises and rewards are to encourage the tractable. But yet we must apply this principally to grown persons; for, as to children or infants, there cannot be a more pernicious error than to terrify them, as is the common practice of foolish nurses, with *Bugbears, Hobgoblins, Raw-heads, and Bloody-bones*, &c. which often fix such impressions of fear and apprehension on the *infant*, as can never be rooted out of the man.

FAB. 167. AN EAGLE AND A TORTOISE.

A HUMOUR once took a tortoise in the head, and he must needs get an eagle to teach him to fly. The eagle told him it was a thing against nature and common sense; but the more the one was against it, the more the other was for it: Whereupon the eagle took him up steeple-high into the air, and there dropt him down upon a rock, which dashed him to pieces.

MORAL.

It is a most unnatural vanity for a creature that was made for one condition to aspire to another. Many a fool has good counsel offered him, who has neither the wit or the grace to take it; and his wilfulness commonly ends in his ruin.

REFLECTION.

Every thing in nature has its appointed place and condition, and there's no putting a force upon any thing contrary to the bias and intent of its institution. Many of the ridiculous upstarts whom we find promoted in the world, we may imagine to be so many tortoises in the air; and when they fluttered there a while, he that took them up grows either ashamed or weary of them, and so lets them drop again, and their latter end is more shameful than their beginning. We see a thousand instances in the world, as ridiculous as this in the fable, of men made for one condition, who yet affect another. The fiction of Phaeton in the chariot of the sun; the frog vying bulk with an ox;

and

and the tortoiſe riding upon the wings of the wind; all tend to preſcribe bounds and meaſures to our exorbitant paſſions; and at the ſame time ſhew us, upon the iſſue, that unnatural attempts are generally attended with fatal conſequences.

FAB. 168. AN OLD CRAB AND A YOUNG.

CHILD, ſays a mother-crab to her young one, you muſt uſe yourſelf to walk ſtraight, without ſkueing and ſhailing ſo every ſtep you ſet. Pray, mother, ſays the young crab, be pleaſed to ſet the example yourſelf, and I'll follow you.

MORAL.

It is with a very ill grace that we adviſe others to do, what we either do not, or cannot do ourſelves.

REFLECTION.

Example works a great deal more than precept; for words without practice are but counſels without effect. When we do as we ſay, it is a confirmation of the rule; but when our lives and doctrines do not agree, it looks as if the leſſon were either too hard for us, or that we ourſelves thought the advice we gave not worth the while to follow. We ſhould mend our own manners before we offer to reform our neighbours, and not condemn others for what we do ourſelves. This fable may alſo be applied as a leſſon to parents, not to ſet evil examples to their children; for as the talent of the latter is only imitation, examples of vices or weakneſſes have, at leaſt, as forcible an effect upon ductile minds, as examples of virtue. And it holds in public too, as well as in private, that the words and actions of our ſuperiors have the authority and force of a recommendation. *Regis ad exemplum*, is ſo true, that it is morally impoſſible to have a ſober people under a mad government. For where lewdneſs is the way to preferment, men are wicked by intereſt, as well as by inclination.

FAB. 169 THE SUN AND THE WIND.

A CONTROVERSY betwixt the ſun and the wind, which was the ſtronger of the two, was agreed to be decided in favour of him which could make a traveller quit his cloak. The wind fell preſently a ſtorming,

ing, and threw hail-ſhot over and above, in the very teeth of him. The man wraps himſelf up the cloſer, and keeps advancing ſtill in ſpite of the weather. The ſun then began his part, and darted his beams upon him ſo ſtrong, that at laſt the traveller grew faint with the heat, put off his cloak, and lay down in the ſhade to refreſh himſelf.

MORAL.

Mildneſs and perſuaſion win upon ingenuous minds ſooner than a bluſtering and bullying behaviour.

REFLECTION.

The contention of the ſun and the wind in the influence of the latter, may ſhew us the effects of perſecution on the minds of men, which generally hardens and confirms them in their principles, whether good or bad: While in the ſun we ſee the ſucceſs of a mild and benign nature, which generally ſoftens and overcomes the moſt obſtinate ſpirits.

FAB. 170. AN ASS IN A LION's SKIN.

An aſs having found a lion's ſkin, threw it about him, and maſqueraded it up and down the woods. The world was his own for a while, and wherever he went, every one fled before him: But at laſt taking it into his head to imitate the lion's roar, he fell a braying. This made the flying foreſters turn about, and then they eſpied his ears too; upon which they all fell upon him, uncaſed him, and gave him cauſe to repent his fooliſh jeſting.

MORAL.

Every fool ſtill has ſome mark or other to be known by through all diſguiſes; and the more he takes upon him, the arrant er fot he makes himſelf, when he comes to be unmaſqued.

REFLECTION.

One general mark of an impoſtor is this, that he outdoes the original; as the aſs here in the lion's ſkin made fifty times more clutter, than the lion would have done in his own, and himſelf fifty times the more ridiculous for the diſguiſe.

If a man turns his thought from this fancy in the foreſt, to the other truth of daily experience in the world, he ſhall find aſſes in the ſkins of men infi-

nitely more contemptible than this ass in the skin of a lion. How many terrible asses have we seen in the garb of men of honour! How many insipid and illiterate fops, who pretend to be men of science and learning! In a word, the moral of this fable hits all sorts of arrogant pretenders, and runs effectually into the whole business of human life. For all places are full of quacks, jugglers, and plagiaries, who set up for men of quality, conscience, philosophy, and religion. But as Nature never put the tongue of a philosopher into the mouth of a coxcomb, such an one no sooner begins to speak, but his foolish braying and ears expose all the ass within him, and he meets with the contempt which he so justly deserves.

FAB. 171. THE FROG TURNED PHYSICIAN.

A FROG, raising himself upon the highest bank of a pond, made proclamation of his skill in physic to an assembly of beasts gathered round him. Among the rest was a fox, who surveying the aspect of the impostor with an air of contempt, said, Thou art a pretty fellow indeed, with that wretched complexion, and hoarse voice, to set up to cure other people. Practise thy skill upon thyself, and we shall judge of thy pretensions by thy success.

MORAL.

Physician heal thyself, *is a known aphorism*; *and a doctor labouring in a consumption or dropsy, gives no great encouragement for people in the same malady to apply to him for advice.*

REFLECTION.

This fable is a good reproof to all such as are guilty of those vices and faults which they censure in others. In vain does a known drunkard preach against sottishness, a sensual man against concupiscence, a haughty man against pride, or a covetous man against avarice. Those precepts, though ever so good in themselves, must lose much of their force, when they are attempted to be propagated by persons, who shew in their own lives and manners that they are not themselves convinced of their truth and efficacy.

FAB. 172.

To face p. 134.



171. Frog turnd Physician. 134.



172. A Gurst Dog. 135.



173. Two Friends & Bear. 135.



174. Bald Cavalier. 136.



175. Two Pots. 137.



176. Good & Bad Luck 137.



177. Peacock & Crane. 138.



178. Tyger & Fox. 139.



179. Lion & Bulls. 140.



180. Fir tree & Bramble 141.

FAB. 172. A CURST DOG.

A CERTAIN man had a good houſe-dog, which for that reaſon he was loth to part with, though he was very miſchievous to ſtrangers. He therefore put a clog to his neck, as alſo a bell to warn people in the day-time of his approach. The dog took this for a particular mark of his maſter's favour, and prided himſelf much upon it, till one of his companions ſhewed him his miſtake. You are mightily out, ſays he, to take this for an ornament, or a token of eſteem, which is, in truth, no other than a note of infamy ſet upon you for your ill manners.

MORAL.

This may ſerve for an admonition to thoſe who glory in their ſhame.

REFLECTION.

It is a bad world, when the rules and meaſures of good and evil are either inverted or miſtaken; and when a brand of infamy paſſes for a badge of honour. The fancy of this dog was ſomewhat like the Frenchwoman's freak, who ſtood up for the honour of her family: *Her coat was quartered*, ſhe ſaid, *with the arms of France*; which was ſo far true, that ſhe had the flower-de-luce ſtamped upon her ſhoulder; the uſual brand of diſgrace for particular crimes in that kingdom.

FAB. 173. TWO FRIENDS AND A BEAR.

TWO friends travelling together, under an agreement of ſtanding by one another, let what would happen, met a bear upon the way: They found there was no running for it. So the one whips up a tree, and the other throws himſelf flat with his face upon the ground, and held in his breath. The bear comes directly up to him, muzzles and ſmells to him, puts his noſe to his mouth and to his ears; and at laſt, taking for granted that it was only a carcaſe, there he leaves him. The bear was no ſooner gone, but down comes his companion with a ſneer, and aſked him, what it was the bear whiſpered him in the ear? He bade me, ſays he, have a care how I keep company with thoſe

that in time of diſtreſs will leave their friends in the lurch.

MORAL.

True friendſhip, like gold in the fire, is tried in the time of our adverſity; and he that then ſhrinks away from us is never more to be truſted.

REFLECTION.

There is no living in this world, no ſociety, no ſecurity without friendſhip; but the only trial of it is in adverſity: And there are very few that can ſtand it. But ſuch a man as can abandon his friend in his diſtreſs, and, like the traveller in the tree, ſneer at and ridicule him on the danger he had ſo narrowly eſcaped, is of all others the leaſt to be excuſed, or truſted again.

FAB. 174. THE BALD CAVALIER.

WHEN perriwigs were firſt uſed, and then chiefly to cover the defect of baldneſs, a certain cavalier had one for that purpoſe, which paſſed for his own hair. But as he was one day riding out in company, a ſudden puff of wind blew off both his wig and his hat, and ſet the company in a loud laugh at his bald pate. He, for his part, fell a laughing with the reſt, and ſaid, Why, really, Gentlemen, this is merry enough; for how could I expect to keep other peoples hair, who could not preſerve my own?

MORAL.

The edge of a jeſt is quite blunted and turned off when a man has preſence of mind to join in it againſt himſelf, or begin it.

REFLECTION.

A frank eaſy way of openneſs and candour agrees beſt with all humours; and he that is over-ſolicitous to conceal a defect, often does as good as make proclamation of it. And it is a turn of art in many caſes, where a man lies open to ridicule, to anticipate the jeſt, and make ſport with himſelf firſt.

The epigram of Martial upon a lady, who, in a caſe in point, was for hiding a defect like that of the bald knight, and made uſe of falſe hair, carries with it the ſeverer ſting, as ſhe was willing and ſtudious to conceal it. The poet, made Engliſh, ſays:

The

The golden hair that Galla wears,
Is her's: Who would have thought it?
She ſwears 'tis hers—And true ſhe ſwears,
For I know *where* ſhe *bought* it.

FAB. 175. TWO POTS.

A BRASS pot and an earthen one were by a violent inundation ſwept off the bank, and carried down the ſtream together. The braſs pot ſeeing the earthen one avoid him, bid him fear nothing, for he would do him no hurt. Not willingly, I believe, ſays the other; but we are of conſtitutions ſo different, that if I ſtrike againſt you, or you againſt me, I only ſhall be the ſufferer.

MORAL.

Unequal fellowſhips are dangerous. Not but that great and ſmall, rich and poor, may ſort well enough together, ſo long as the good humour laſts; but wherever there are men there will be claſhing ſome time or other, and then the weak one is always ſure to ſuffer.

REFLECTION.

There can be no true friendſhip but betwixt equals. The rich and the poor, the ſtrong and the weak, very ſeldom agree together long. And there needs no ill will, nor malice neither, to do the miſchief, but the diſparity or diſproportion alone is enough. The ſame expence that breaks a poor man's back, will not hurt a rich man. Wherefore men ſhould conſort themſelves with their equals: for a man of ſmall fortune, who converſes upon a foot with a rich man, ſhall as certainly be undone by him, as a braſs pot ſhall break an earthen one, if they meet and knock together.

FAB. 176. GOOD LUCK AND BAD LUCK.

A MAN who had raiſed himſelf from a ſmall fortune by ſucceſsful traffic to a large one, was boaſting: *Why, aye*, ſays he, *this it is when a man underſtands his buſineſs; for I have done all this by my own ſkill.* Avarice is inſatiable, and ſo he went puſhing on ſtill for more; till, what by wrecks, bankrupts, and pirates, one upon the neck of another, he was reduced in half the time that he was a riſing, to a morſel of bread. Why this, ſays he, is owing to my curſed fortune! Fortune happened

to be at that time within hearing, and told him, that he was an arrogant, ungrateful clown, to charge her with all the evil that befel him, and to take the good to himself.

MORAL.

We are apt to arrogate to ourselves the successes we meet with; but our misfortunes we ungratefully charge upon Providence, under the name of Fortune.

REFLECTION.

Our hearts are so much set upon the value of the benefits we receive, that we never think of the bestower of them, and so our acknowledgments are commonly paid to the second hand, without any regard to the principal. We run into mistakes and misfortunes of our own accord; and then, when we are once hampered, we lay the blame of them upon others. This or that was not well done, we say; but, alas! it was none of our fault: We did it by constraint, advice, importunity, or the authority perhaps of great examples, and the like: At this rate we palliate our own weaknesses and corruptions, and at the same rate we likewise assume to ourselves the merits of others. The thing to be done, in fine, is to correct this arrogance, and be thankful to God for the benefits we receive at his hands; and resign ourselves to his all-wise Providence in those dispensations which we are so apt to reckon misfortunes; but which, made a right use of, may frequently turn to our highest benefit, if not in this world, in that to come.

FAB. 177. A PEACOCK AND A CRANE.

AS a peacock and a crane were in company together, the peacock spread his tail, and challenged the other to shew him such a fan of feathers. You brag of your plumes, says the crane, that are fair indeed to the eye, but fit for nothing but to attract the eyes of children and fools. Do as I do, if you can; and then, with a suitable contempt, he springs up into the air, leaving the gaping peacock staring after him till his eyes ached.

MORAL.

There cannot be a greater sign of a weak mind, than a person's valuing himself on a gaudy outside; whether it be on

or the beauties of perſon, or the ſtill vainer pride of fine cloaths.

REFLECTION.

The mind that can penetrate like the high-ſoaring crane through the elements of ſcience, and leave the fluttering peacocks of the world, with a generous contempt, unable to trace its ſublime flights, is infinitely preferable to that gaudy plumage which is confined to the dull earth, and utterly unable to riſe above the low delights of it.

Thus much may be pointed out to us by this fable. But after all, if we take it in a more confined ſenſe, we muſt conſider, that nature is pleaſed to entertain herſelf with variety. Some of her works are for ornament, others for the uſe and ſervice of mankind. But they have all, reſpectively, their properties and their virtues; for ſhe does nothing in vain. The peacock values himſelf upon the gracefulneſs of his train; the crane's pride is in the ſtrength of her wing: Which are only two excellencies in ſeveral kinds. Take them apart, and they are both equally perfect. But good things themſelves have their degrees; and that which is moſt neceſſary and uſeful, muſt be allowed a preference to the other.

FAB. 178. A TYGER AND A FOX.

AS a huntſman was upon the chace, and the beaſts flying before him; Let me alone, ſays the tyger, and I'll put an end to this war myſelf: He had no ſooner ſaid this, but he found himſelf ſtruck through the body with an arrow; and while he was trying to draw it out, a fox aſked him, from what bold hand it was that he received this wound? I believe, ſays the tyger, it muſt be from a man; and I find, too late, that there is no contending againſt an adverſary, who can wound without coming within the reach of one's revenge.

MORAL.

Conteſts with perſons of ſuperior power or ability are ſtudiouſly to be avoided.

REFLECTION.

Reaſon and ſtratagem are often too hard for force; for temerity or raſhneſs generally puts a man off his guard,

guard. It is a high point of wiſdom for a man to be ſo preſent to himſelf, as to be provided againſt all accidents; and to do this, he will diligently inquire into the character, ſtrength, motions, and deſigns of an enemy. The want of this circumſpection has often been the ruin of great and formidable armies, and made even a contemptible enemy ſuperior in the field. The tyger's overvaluing his own ſtrength and the ſharpneſs of his teeth and claws, and undervaluing his adverſary, whoſe wiles and ſtratagems he was unacquainted with, was the occaſion of his ruin.

FAB. 179. A LION AND BULLS.

A PARTY of bulls ſtruck up a league to keep and feed together, and ſtand by one another in caſe of a common enemy. So long as they ſtuck to this confederacy they were ſafe; but ſoon after they fell at variance among themſelves, and the lion made his advantage of it, and one by one deſtroyed them all.

MORAL.

Inteſtine diviſions are the bane of a commonwealth. A houſe or a kingdom, as the ſacred text obſerves, divided againſt itſelf cannot ſtand.

REFLECTION.

The main bond of all bodies and intereſts is union; which is no other in effect than a common ſtock of ſtrength and counſel joined in one. While the bulls kept together they were ſafe; but as ſoon as ever they ſeparated, they became a prey to the lion. There was a caſe too much like this in the grand alliance between the Emperor, England, Holland, and other princes, in the late long and expenſive war againſt France. While all the potentates concerned united, the war was carried on with great ſucceſs againſt the common enemy; but no ſooner was one of the moſt formidable powers in the alliance brought off from it, and a ſeparate peace concluded, than diſſentions, doubts, and diſtruſts, were ſown among the reſt, and the French king ſoon brought them all to his own terms, one after another; and that monarchy has ever ſince found it in its power, in ſome ſort, to give laws to the reſt of Chriſtendom.

FAB. 180. A FIR AND A BRAMBLE.

My head, says the boasting fir-tree to the humble bramble, is advanced among the stars; I furnish beams for palaces, and masts for shipping; the very sweat of my body is a sovereign remedy for the sick and wounded: Whereas thou, O rascally bramble! run'st creeping in the dirt, and art good for nothing in the world but mischief. I pretend not to vie with thee, said the bramble, in the points thou glorieſt in. But, not to insist upon it, that he who made thee a lofty fir, could have made thee an humble bramble, I pray thee tell me, when the carpenter comes next with the ax into the wood, to fell timber, whether thou hadst not rather be a bramble than a fir-tree.

MORAL.

Poverty secures a man from many dangers: Whereas the rich and the mighty are the marks of malice and croſs fortune; and ſtill the higher they are, the near the thunder.

REFLECTION.

The answer of the humble bramble to the proud fir-tree is so pathetic, that it may of itself serve for a very good moral to this fable. Nothing of God's works is so mean as to be despised; and nothing so lofty but it may be humbled: nay, and the greater the height the greater the danger. For a proud great man to despise an humble little one, when Providence can so easily exalt the one, and abase the other, and has not for the merit of the one, or the demerit of the other, conferred the respective conditions, is a most inexcusable arrogance: And history has given numberless instances, where the overgrown fir, though a prime minister, or great prince, in the very height of its pride, has been forced to submit to the executioner's ax; while the humble bramble, or contented poor man, has continued safe and unhurt in his lowly obscurity. We may further observe on this fable, that there is no state of life but has its mixture of good and evil. The fir may boast of the uses to which it is put, and of its strength and stature; but then it has not to boast of the creeping bramble's safety; for the value of the one tempts the carpenter's ax, while the poverty of the other makes it little worth any one's

one's while to moleſt it. Upon the whole matter, we may add, That as pride or arrogance is a vice that ſeldom eſcapes without a puniſhment; ſo humility is a virtue that hardly ever goes without a bleſſing.

FAB. 181. A COVETOUS MAN AND AN ENVIOUS.

A COVETOUS man and an envious one, becoming petitioner's to Jupiter, were told, that what the one aſked ſhould be doubled on the other. The covetous man, according to his character deſired great riches, and his companion had them double. This did not, however, ſatisfy the envious man, who repining that the covetous man was but half as rich as himſelf, requeſted that one of his own eyes might be put out; for his companion was then to loſe both his.

MORAL.

Avarice and envy are two of the moſt diabolical and unſociable vices under heaven. Avarice would monopolize every thing to itſelf, and envy repines at every good thing poſſeſſed by its neighbours.

REFLECTION.

The covetous man in this fable had a very hard put. As avarice is always attended with ſome envy, it was no ſmall mortification to one who would have been glad to have engroſſed all, to be under a neceſſity of making another twice as rich as himſelf by virtue of his own choice. But an envious man cannot poſſibly be ſhewn in a ſtronger light than he is here. For he not only repines that his companion is half as rich as he, though he enjoys his own double ſhare by virtue of the other's prayer; but he chooſes to forego all the benefits which he, in his turn, might reap by his petition, leſt his neighbour ſhould have double; and prays for a curſe upon himſelf, to wit, that he might loſe one of his own eyes, that ſo the other might loſe both his, and be thereby made incapable of enjoying with comfort the acquiſition he had ſo ardently coveted. This remarkable inſtance of envy and avarice admoniſhes us to be cautious how we give way to ſuch wicked paſſions, as not only make the perſons governed by them a torment to themſelves, but render them at the ſame time odious to God and man.

FAB. 182. A CROW AND A PITCHER.

A THIRSTY crow found a pitcher with a little water in it, but it lay so low he could not come at it. He tried first to break the pot, and then to overturn it; but it was both too strong and too heavy for him. At last he bethought himself of a device that did his business; which was, by dropping a great many little pebbles into the water, and so raising it, till he had it within reach.

MORAL.

What we cannot compass by the force of natural faculties, may be brought to pass many times by art and invention.

REFLECTION.

We ought not by any means to be discouraged by seeming impossibilities in our laudable pursuits after what is necessary or fit for us or our families. We are, on the contrary, to use all our honest endeavours, and double our diligence to overcome all such difficulties as may be thrown in the way of our attaining blessings which are necessary to our welfare. How many inventions and fine arts have been struck out by virtue of necessity, which otherwise would never have been discovered!

FAB. 183. A LION AND A MAN.

IN a controversy betwixt a lion and a man, which was the braver and the stronger creature of the two; Why, look ye, says the man, we'll appeal to that statue there; and so he shewed him the figure of a man cut in stone, with a lion under his feet. Well, says the lion, if we lions had been brought up to painting and carving as you men are, where you have one lion under the feet of a man, you should have had twenty men under the paw of a lion.

MORAL.

It is against the rules of common justice for men to be judges in their own cause.

REFLECTION.

The fancies of poets, painters, and engravers are no evidences of truth; for people are partial in their own cases, and every man will make the best of his own tale.

It

It is againſt common equity for the ſame people to be both parties and judges; and there is a great difference betwixt a flight of fancy and the hiſtory of nature. This fable may further inſtruct us, that no judgments, as to matters of right and wrong, between diſputing parties, ought to be formed upon the relations made by one party of his caſe; which may appear in a very different light when both ſides are heard.

FAB. 184. A BOY AND A THIEF.

A THIEF came to a boy, who pretended to be blubbering by the ſide of a well, and aſked what he cried for? Why, ſays he, the ſtring's broke here, and I have dropt a ſilver cup into the well. The fellow preſently ſtrips, and down he goes to ſearch for it. After a while, he comes up again with his labour for his pains, and found that the roguiſh boy, in the mean time, had run away with his cloaths.

MORAL.

It muſt be a diamond that cuts a diamond; and though all robberies are unlawful, yet that of rob-thief *is the leaſt culpable, though it is not at all excuſable as to the laws of morality. The boy puniſhes the thief; and the law, in all likelihood, in time, found out, and puniſhed the boy, if not for this, for other practices; for ſo early and ſucceſsful a roguery, no doubt, was not the laſt.*

REFLECTION.

The boy's having over-reached and robbed a thief, was but a very ſmall extenuation of his crime; for no doubt but he laid the bait for the next that came by, and it might as well have been an honeſt man as a thief: Nor indeed would it have been excuſable, had he known that the next perſon that came by would be a thief; for the wickedneſs of one man is no excuſe for the iniquity of another: Nor ought I, becauſe another does me an injury, to do him one in return. Is the thing *juſt*, or is it *not?* ought to be the conſideration; and it is much better to *bear* an offence than to *give* one.

FAB. 185. A MAN AND A SATYR.

A GREAT intimacy was ſtruck up between a man and a ſatyr. The man clapt his fingers one day to his mouth, and blew upon them. What is that for? ſays the ſatyr: Why, ſays he, my hands are extreme cold, and I do it to warm them. The ſatyr, at another time, found this man blowing his pottage: And pray, ſays he, what is the meaning of that now? Oh! ſays the man, my broth is hot, and I do it to cool it. Nay, ſays the ſatyr, if you have gotten a trick of blowing hot and cold out of the ſame mouth, I have done with you.

MORAL.

There is no converſing with any man that carries two faces under one hood.

REFLECTION.

This fable, abſtracted from the philoſophy of it, ſets forth the ſimplicity of the ſatyr, in not underſtanding how two ſuch contrary effects ſhould come from the ſame lips: But it was honeſtly done in him yet, to renounce the converſation of one whom he took for a double-dealer; and who, as he thought, could accommodate himſelf to all ſeaſons and occaſions, without any regard to truth or juſtice. It was this fable that gave riſe to the old adage of *blowing hot and cold*; which is taken for the mark and character of a diſſembler.

FAB. 186. A COUNTRYMAN AND HERCULES.

A CARTER whoſe waggon ſtuck faſt in a ſlough, ſtood gaping and bawling to Hercules, to help him out of the mire. Why, you lazy puppy you, ſays Hercules, lay your ſhoulder to the wheel yourſelf: Are the gods to do your drudgery, do ye think, and you lie bellowing with your finger in your mouth?

MORAL.

We muſt uſe our own endeavours, if we would ſucceed in our affairs, and not content ourſelves with ſitting ſtill, and expecting miracles in our favour.

REFLECTION.

Prayers without works are nothing worth, either for other people, or for ourſelves: There is a double duty incumbent upon us, in the exerciſe of thoſe powers

and abilities which Providence has given us for the common good of both. It is not a bare, *Lord, have mercy upon us*, that will help the cart out of the mire, or our neighbour out of the ditch, but we muſt put our own hands to the work. To take the fable in another ſenſe, we may aſk, What ſignifies the ſound of words in prayer without the affection of the heart, and a ſedulous application of the proper means that may naturally lead to ſuch an end? That is to ſay, body and ſoul muſt go together in all the offices of a Chriſtian life, as well as of a civil one, where there is place for the exerciſe of the faculties of both.

He, in fine, who made body and ſoul, will be ſerved and glorified by both.

FAB. 187. AN APE AND HER TWO BRATS.

AN ape that had twins, doted upon one of them, and did not much care for the other. She took a ſudden fright once, and in a hurry whips up her darling under her arm, and took no heed of the other, which therefore leapt aſtride upon her ſhoulders. In this haſte down ſhe comes, and beats out her favourite's brains againſt a ſtone; while that which ſhe had at her back came off ſafe and ſound.

MORAL.

Fondlings are commonly unfortunate; and the children that are leaſt indulged make uſually the beſt men.

REFLECTION.

We cannot command our likings or our averſions; but yet whatever partial diſpoſitions we may have, our fondneſs ſhould not tranſport us beyond the bounds of a diſcreet affection; nor ſhould we be more kind to one child than to another. Children are naturally jealous and envious, and the damping of their ſpirits ſo early, hazards the quenching of them for ever. Beſide that, there is no ſuch fop as my young maſter, that has the honour to be a fool of his mother's making. She blows him up into a conceit of himſelf, and makes a man of him at ſixteen, and a boy all the days of his life after.

FAB. 188. A FOX AND A HEDGE-HOG.

A FOX, upon the croſſing of a river, was forced away by the current into an eddy, and there he lay with whole ſwarms of flies ſucking and galling him. A water-hedge-hog offered to beat away the flies from him. No, no, ſays the fox, pray let them alone; for the flies that are upon me now are even burſting full already, and can do me little more hurt than they have done: But when theſe are gone once, there will be a company of ſtarved hungry wretches to take their places, that will torment me ten times worſe.

MORAL.

It is better to bear a preſent calamity, though grievous, than, by endeavouring to remove it, run the probable hazard of a worſe.

REFLECTION.

This fable was made uſe of by Æſop to the Samians, on occaſion of a popular ſedition; and had the deſired ſucceſs. It is very inſtructive, and teaches us to avoid murmuring againſt our preſent condition, as well in public as private; for in ſeeking to remedy ſmaller evils, in both caſes, we often plunge ourſelves into worſe. There is nothing perfect under the ſun, but ſomewhat ſtill of good is blended with the bad, and of bad with the good; and this natural mixture runs through the whole courſe and condition of human affairs. We are not therefore to make ourſelves uneaſy in what may be borne; but before we try to exchange our conditions, conſider the hazards that may lie in the way, the diſappointments that may attend the attempt; and finally, if we ſucceed, whether by avoiding one evil we run not into another, which may poſſibly be more inſupportable than the former.

FAB. 189. A COUNTRYMAN AND A HAWK.

A COUNTRY fellow had the fortune to take a hawk in the hot purſuit of a pigeon. The hawk pleaded for herſelf, that ſhe never did the countryman any harm; and therefore I hope, ſays ſhe, that you will do me none. Well, ſays the countryman, and pray, what wrong did the pigeon ever do you? You muſt even expect to be treated yourſelf, as you yourſelf would have treated this

pigeon. Alas! for me, says the hawk, I have, it is true, met with my deserved fate from a hand as much too strong for me, as I was for the pigeon; but in a little time, I doubt the poor pigeon will not be much the better for her present escape; which is only from one devourer to another.

MORAL.

It is but according to the course of the world for the stronger to oppress the weaker; and some powerful men will permit no injustice to be done but by themselves.

REFLECTION.

Birds of prey are an emblem of rapacious officers. A superior power takes away by violence from them, that which by violence they took from others. But it falls out too often, that the equity of restitution is forgotten, after the execution of the punishment. Here a countryman takes a hawk in the chase of a pigeon; the hawk reasons the case with him; the countryman pleads the pigeon's cause; and upon a fair hearing the hawk stands condemned out of her own mouth, and the innocent is consequently delivered from her oppressor. Now there is one violence disappointed by another; a poor harmless wretch protected against a powerful adversary; justice done upon a notorious persecutor; and yet, after all this glorious semblance of a public-spirited generosity, and tenderness of nature, the man only saved the pigeon from the hawk that he might eat it himself: And if we look well about us, we shall find this to be the case of most meditations we meet with in the name of public justice.

FAB. 190. A SWALLOW AND A SPIDER.

A SPIDER that observed a swallow catching of flies, fell immediately to work upon a net to catch swallows; for she looked upon it as an encroachment upon her right: But the birds, without any difficulty, brake thro' the work, and flew away with the very net itself. Well, says the spider, bird-catching is none of my talent, I perceive; and so she returned to her old trade of catching flies again.

MORAL.

Fab. 191. Swan & Stork. 149.



192. Hedge Hog & Snake. 150



193. Gnat & Bee. 151.



194. Lion Ass & Hare. 152.



195. Pigeons & Hawks. 153.



196. Death & an Old Man. 153



197. Industry & Sloth. 154.



198. Cock & Fox. 166.



199. Boys & Frogs. 156.



200. Frogs & Bulls. 157.



MORAL.

A wise man will not undertake any thing without means answerable to the end.

REFLECTION.

Let every man examine his own strength, and the force of the enemy he is to cope withal, before he comes to grapple with him: For he is sure to go by the worst, that contends with an adversary that is too mighty for him. It is good advice not to contend with those that are too strong for us, but still with a saving to honesty and justice; for the integrity of the mind must be supported against all violence and hazards whatsoever. The intent of the fable is to set us right in the understanding and interpreting of injuries. It is an unhappy error to take things for injuries that are not so: And then, supposing an injury done, it is a nice point to proportion the reparation to the degree of the indignity, and to take a true measure of our own force. The swallow was a fly-catcher, as well as the spider, and no more an interloper upon the spider's right, than the spider was upon the swallow's; for the flies were in common to both.

There are swarms of this sort of state-spiders in the world, who reckon every little thing or fly that is taken out of the common stock, as a penny out of their own pockets. The bounty of God and of princes ought to be free, both alike, without making every morsel of bread which an honest man puts in his mouth, to be the robbing of a minion. Wherefore let every man compute, First, What he ought to do. Secondly, What he is able to do. And then, Thirdly, Let him govern himself by the rules of virtue and discretion.

FAB. 191. A SWAN AND A STORK.

A STORK that was present at the song of a dying swan, told her, It was contrary to nature to sing so much out of season; and asked her the reason of it. Why, says the swan, I am now entering into a state where I shall be no longer in danger of either snares, guns, or hunger; and who would not joy at such a deliverance?

MORAL.

Death is a certain relief from all the difficulties, pains and hazards of life.

REFLECTION.

It is a great folly to fear that which it is impoſſible to avoid; and it is yet a greater folly to fear the remedy of all evils: For death cures all diſeaſes, and frees us from all cares. It is as great a folly again, not to prepare ourſelves, and provide for an inevitable fate. We are as ſure to go out of the world, as we are that ever we came into it; and nothing but the conſcience of a good life can ſupport us in that laſt extremity. The fiction of a ſwan's ſinging at her death, does, in the moral, but adviſe and recommend it to us, to make ready for the cheerful entertainment of our laſt hour, and to conſider with ourſelves, that if death be ſo welcome a relief even to animals, barely as a deliverance from the cares, miſeries, and dangers of a troubleſome life, how much a greater bleſſing ought all good men to account it then, that are not only freed by it from the ſnares, difficulties, and diſtractions of a wicked world, but put into poſſeſſion (over and above) of an everlaſting peace, and the fruition of joys that ſhall never have an end?

FAB. 192. A HEDGE-HOG AND A SNAKE.

A SNAKE was prevailed upon, in a cold winter, to take a hedge-hog into his cell; but when he was once in, the place was ſo narrow, that the prickles of the hedge-hog were very troubleſome to his companion; ſo that the ſnake told him, he muſt needs provide for himſelf ſomewhere elſe, for the hole was not big enough to hold them both. Why then, ſays the hedge-hog, he that cannot ſtay, ſhall do well to go: But, for my own part, I am even content where I am; and if you be not ſo too, you are free to remove.

MORAL.

It is not ſafe to join intereſts with ſtrangers upon ſuch terms as to lay ourſelves at their mercy.

REFLECTION.

In all offices of Chriſtian charity, and of prudent converſation, people ſhould have a ſtrict regard to the humour and character of the perſons they deal withal, to the degrees and meaſures of things, and to the conſequences upon the whole matter, in caſe of the worſt.

How

How many examples may we find of men, who, after all the obligations imaginable, and in contradiction to all the ties of honour, justice, and hospitality, have served their masters, patrons, and benefactors, as the hedge-hog served the snake here!

FAB. 193. A GNAT AND A BEE.

A GNAT, half-starved with cold and hunger, went out one frosty morning to a bee-hive, to beg a charity; and offered to teach music in the bee's family, for her diet and lodging. The bee very civilly desired to be excused: For, says she, I bring up all my children to my own trade, that they may be able to get their living by their industry; and I am sure I am right; for see what that music, which you would teach my children, has brought you yourself to!

MORAL.

Industry ought to be diligently inculcated in the minds of children of all ranks and degrees: For who stands so sure, as to say he is exempt from the vicissitudes of this uncertain life?

REFLECTION.

The many unhappy persons whom we daily see singing up and down in order to divert other people, though with very heavy hearts of their own, should warn all those who have the education of children, how necessary it is to bring them up to industry and business, be their present prospects ever so hopeful; that so, upon any unexpected disaster, they might be able to turn their hands to a course which might procure them an honest livelihood.

The gnat in the fable, we may further observe, is very like many inconsiderate persons in life: They gaily buz about in the *summer of prosperity*, and think of nothing but their present enjoyments: but when the *winter of adversity* comes, they poorly creep about, and supplicate the industrious inhabitants of every *bee-hive*, charitably to relieve those wants which they have brought upon themselves; and often deservedly meet the repulse, and the sting, which the bee gives to the gnat in the fable. We have seen many a doted on child, who has been brought up to singing, dancing, and all the gay delights of this world, and yet has been forced to shut

up

up the laſt ſcene of a miſerable life, in want and beggary; which had been prevented, if they had been early taught the value of induſtry and independency, and the means, by the former, of attaining the latter.

FAB. 194. A LION, ASS, AND HARE.

A WAR breaking out betwixt the birds and the beaſts, the lion ſummoned all his ſubjects to appear in arms, at a certain time and place; and, among the reſt, there were multitudes of aſſes and hares at the rendezvous. Several of the commanders were for turning them off, as creatures utterly unfit for ſervice. Do not miſtake yourſelves ſays the lion; the aſſes will do very well for trumpeters, and the hares will make excellent couriers.

MORAL.

God has made nothing in vain. There is no member of a political body ſo mean and inconſiderable, but it may be uſeful to the public in ſome ſtation or other.

REFLECTION.

Every diſtinct being has ſomewhat peculiar to itſelf, to make good in one circumſtance what it wants in another. It is the ignorance of the nature of things that makes us deſpiſe even the meaneſt of creatures. All things are created good in their ſeveral kinds, as all things ſeverally are ſubſervient, in ſome degree or other, to the beauty, the order, and the well-being of the whole. That which we find in the courſe of nature, holds likewiſe in governments, where the loweſt has its poſt allotted as well as the higheſt. All created beings are, in fine, the works of Providence and Nature, which never did any thing in vain. So truly ſays the poet,

——————— *Wiſe Providence*
Does various parts for various minds diſpenſe;
The meaneſt ſlaves, or they who hedge and ditch,
Are uſeful by their ſweat, to feed the rich:
The rich, in due return, impart their ſtore,
Which comfortably feeds the labʼring poor.
Nor let the rich the loweſt ſlave diſdain:
He's equally a link of Nature's chain:
Labours to the ſame end, joins in one view;
And both alike the will divine purſue.

FAB. 195.

FAB. 195. THE PIGEONS AND HAWKS.

A CIVIL war once raged among the hawks; and the innocent pigeons, who were safe while these feuds lasted, in pure pity and good-nature, sent their deputies and mediators to make them friends again; but no sooner was the quarrel ended among themselves, than they fell to their old sport again of destroying the pigeons; who too late found their error, in having united a common enemy to their own ruin.

MORAL.

It is dangerous intermeddling with the quarrels of wicked or turbulent persons. When bad men fall out among themselves, good men are often benefited and secured by the consequences of their divisions.

REFLECTION.

The blessing that is pronounced upon the peace-makers, does not extend to those cases where the effect of the peace shall be the ruin of the reconcilers. When two powerful princes are contending for superiority, it would be but an unseasonable piece of policy, for a third and weaker state, who has much to fear from both, to endeavour to reconcile them: For ambitious and restless monarchs, when they have made up their broils with one another, have leisure to look out for fresh occasions of quarrel, and perhaps may join forces, in order to conquer, and divide betwixt them, the dominions of the officious umpire. Such instances are to be met with in history.

FAB. 196. DEATH AND AN OLD MAN.

DEATH called upon an old man, and bade him come along with him. The man excused himself, that the other world was a great journey to take upon so short warning, and begged a little time, only to make his will before he died. Why, says Death, you have had warning enough, one would think, to have made ready before this; for you have had daily examples of mortality before your eyes, in all people of all sorts, ages, and degrees; and is not the frequent spectacle of other peoples death a *memento* sufficient to make you think of your own? And what do you think of the fever you had ten years ago, and the surfeit

ſurfeit you had five years after, and the palſy the very laſt year? Don't you know, that every one of theſe was a meſſenger ſent by me, to give you warning that I ſhould come ſhortly myſelf! No more ſhill-I, ſhall-I, honeſt friend: Your time is now come, and therefore come along, I tell you.

MORAL.

Every moment of our lives either is, or ought to be, a time of preparation for death.

REFLECTION.

It is a ſtrange mixture of madneſs and folly for people to ſay or imagine, that ever any man was taken out of this world without time to prepare himſelf for death: But the delay of fitting ourſelves is our own fault, and we turn the very ſin into an excuſe: Every breath we draw is not only a ſtep towards death, but a part of it. Death was born with us; it goes along with us; it is the only conſtant companion that we have in this world, and yet we never think of it any more than if we knew nothing of it. The text is true to the very letter, that *we die daily*, and yet we feel it not. Every thing under the ſun reads a lecture of mortality to us. Our neighbours, our friends, our relations, that fall every where round about us, admoniſh us of our laſt hour; and yet here's an old man, on the wrong ſide of fourſcore perhaps, complaining that he is ſurpriſed.

FAB. 197. INDUSTRY AND SLOTH.

One aſking a lazy young fellow, What made him lie in bed ſo long? Why, ſays he, I am hearing of cauſes every morning; that is to ſay, I have two laſſes at my bed-ſide, ſo ſoon as ever I awake, Their names are *Induſtry* and *Sloth*; one bids me get up; the other bids me lie ſtill; and ſo they give me twenty reaſons why I ſhould riſe, and why I ſhould not. It is the part, in the mean-time, of a juſt judge to hear what can be ſaid on both ſides; and by that time the cauſe is over, it is time to go to dinner.

MORAL.

We ſpend our days in deliberating what to do, and we frequently end them without coming to any reſolution.

REFLECTION.

REFLECTION.

The ſluggard's caſe in this fable is the caſe of mankind in all the duties of life, where judgment and conſcience call us one way, and our luſts hurry us another. We ſpend all our days upon frivolous preliminaries, without ever coming to a reſolution upon the main points of our buſineſs. And yet we know well enough what we ought to do, and what not, if we would but take the light of reaſonable nature for our guide, and hearken to the counſellor that every man carries in his own breaſt. But men, in the general, are either too lazy to ſearch out the truth, or too partial, in favour of a ſenſual appetite, to take notice of it when they have found it. They had rather be taſting the eaſe and the pleaſures of life, than reforming the errors and the vices of it. They are hearing cauſes with our ſlug-a-bed in the apologue; that is to ſay, deliberating betwixt paſſion and conſcience, till in the end they are called away, whether to dinner or death, it makes no matter; for the moral is ſtill the ſame.

FAB. 198. A COCK AND A FOX.

A FOX eſpying a cock at rooſt in a tree with his hens about him, wanted to get him down; and aſked him if he did not hear the news? What news? ſaid the cock. Why, replied the fox, there's a general peace concluded among all living creatures, and not one of them is to preſume, upon pain of life and limb, directly or indirectly, to hurt another. The bleſſedeſt tidings in the world! ſays the cock: And at the ſame time he ſtretches out his neck, as if he were looking at ſomewhat a great way off. What are you peering at? ſays the fox. Nothing, ſays the other, but a couple of great dogs yonder, that are coming this way open-mouth'd, as hard as they can drive. Why then, ſays Reynard, I fancy I had even beſt be jogging. No, no, ſays the cock, the general peace will ſecure you. Ay, quoth the fox, ſo it ought; but if theſe raſcally curs ſhould not have heard of the proclamation, I ſhall be but poorly off for all that. And ſo away he ſcampered.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Perfidious people are naturally to be suspected in reports that favour their own interest.

REFLECTION.

It is a hard matter to make a false man, and a false tale, consist with themselves; and when they come to interfere, the reason and the argument of the case return upon the head of the impostor: So that it requires great care and skill, for a man who has a dark and a double design upon another, to keep clear of clashing with his own reasonings, and to avoid a detection.

FAB. 199. BOYS AND FROGS.

A COMPANY of unlucky boys were watching of frogs at the side of a pond, and still as any of them put up their heads they would be pelting them down again with stones. Children, says one of the frogs, you never consider, that *though this may be play to you, it is death to us.*

MORAL.

Hard-heartedness and cruelty is an inhuman vice; it is a barbarous thing to make our sport of that which is fatal or pernicious to another.

REFLECTION.

The throwing at cocks at Shrove-tide, and the abusing and torturing of puppies, kittens, birds, or flies, so commonly practised by children, is a most shocking and dangerous liberty, not to be suffered on any account; for hard-heartedness in boys will be brutality and tyranny in men. Softness and tenderness of nature are the seeds of a generous humanity; provided always that children be taught to distinguish betwixt a benignity and a facility of disposition, that they may not confound gracious with effeminate. By this means there may be a foundation laid of worthy thoughts, which will ripen in due time into glorious actions and habits, to qualify men for the honour and service of their country. This foundation, I say, of a pious and a virtuous compassion, will dispose men afterward, instead of adding affliction to affliction, and of grinding the faces of the weak and innocent, to minister protection to the oppressed.

Tab. 201. Horse & Sparrows. 157.



202. Two Men & a Hatter. 158.



203. Mountebank & Bear. 159.



204. Skittish Horse. 159.



205. Flattery unrestrainable. 160.



206. Dog & his Master. 161.



207. Ass & Image. 162.



208. Dog & Cat. p. 162.



209. Mastiff & Ass. 163.



210. Woman & Death. 164.



FAB. 200. THE FROGS AND THE BULLS.

In a desperate duel between a couple of bulls, a frog upon the bank of a lake, looking on, said to other frogs, What will become of us now? Why, pry'thee, says one of his companions, what are the bulls to the frogs, or the lakes to the meadows? Very much, I can assure ye, says the frog again; for he that is worsted will very probably take sanctuary in the fens, and then we may be trod to pieces; wherefore, for my part, I will get as far from them as I can.

MORAL.

When princes fall out, the commonalty suffers, and the little go to wreck for the quarrels of the great. Let ill consequences be never so remote, it is good to look forward, and endeavour to provide against the worst that may happen.

REFLECTION.

The design of many actions looks on way, and the event works another, so that even probable mischiefs are to be provided against with equal care and industry. A wise man looks forward, through the proper and natural course and connection of causes and effects; and in so doing he fortifies himself against the worst that can befall him.

FAB. 201. A HARE AND A SPARROW.

A SPARROW happened to take to a bush just as an eagle made a stoop at an hare, and when he had got her in the foot, poor Wat cried out for help. Well, says the sparrow sneeringly, and why do not you run for it now? I thought your footmanship would have saved you. In this very moment comes a hawk, and whips away the sparrow, which gave the dying hare this one consolation, that she saw the hard-hearted creature that had no pity for another, unable to obtain any for herself, when she stood most in need of it.

MORAL.

It is with men and governments, as it is with birds and beasts: the weaker are a prey to the stronger, and so one under another, through the whole scale of the creation.

We ought therefore to have a fellow-feeling of one another's afflictions; for nobody knows whose turn may be next.

REFLECTION.

Here is a just judgment upon ill-nature: Wherefore let no man make sport with the miserable, that is in danger to be miserable himself, as every man may be; and in truth, every man deserves so to be that has no tenderness for his neighbour. It is a high degree of inhumanity not to have a fellow-feeling of the misfortune of my brother; but to take pleasure in my neighbour's misery, and to make merry with it, is not only a brutal but a diabolical barbarity and folly.

FAB. 202. TWO MEN AND A HALTER.

A POOR wretch, who was quite destitute of money, credit, or friends, determined to hang himself: and having provided a halter, and got a hook, he was driving it into an old wall to fasten the cord to; and down comes a great stone that was loose, and a pot of money along with it. The fellow presently drops the halter, and away he scours with the purchase. He was no sooner gone, but up comes the man who had hid the money, to give his pot a visit: He finds the birds flown; and, out of all patience at his loss, he takes up the halter, and hangs himself with it, having no other comfort than this, that fortune had saved him the charge of buying one.

MORAL.

Well may money be said to be the root of all evil; since the want of it makes some men desperate, and the having it makes others miserable.

REFLECTION.

Poverty and riches, where avarice accompanies the latter, are nearer a-kin than most people imagine; for the rich insatiable miser, who is still carking after more, is every whit as miserable as he that has just nothing at all. What is the difference between gold in one part of the earth, and gold in another? Betwixt the minted gold that the sordid churl buries in a pot, and the ore that nature has prepared and tinctured in the mine? They are both equally lost to the common use of mankind; only the one lies a little deeper than the other. We may

may finish this reflection, with a consideration of the folly of those people who starve themselves to enrich others, and make their own lives wretched for the advantage perhaps of thieves and strangers.

FAB. 203. A MOUNTEBANK AND A BEAR.

A QUACK exposing his bills and medicines upon a stage, was surrounded with a very numerous and attentive crowd, till a bear being led that way, with a ring through his nose, they all quitted the mountebank, and ran after the bear; who addressing himself to the rabble, Hark ye, my friends, says he, I am glad to see you so merry at my being led like a sot by the nose thus; but pray, let us laugh at one another by turns; for you are led as much by the *ears* by that same mountebank, as I am by the *nose* by my keeper.

MORAL.

A bear with a ring in his nose, is no more than an emblem of every man of us, as the bear in the fable rightly observed; for we are led as much as he, some by the ear or eye, others by their lusts and affections.

REFLECTION.

No man should make sport with, or condemn any thing in another, without first considering whether he be not guilty of the very same thing himself. The bear is led after one manner, mankind after another; and in some sort or other we are all led; only the bearward in this fable leads but one brute, and the impostor or mountebank leads a thousand. In short, the very course of our lives is little better than a series of mistakes, and a transition from one weakness to another.

FAB. 204. A SKITTISH HORSE.

A SKITTISH horse that used to fly out always at his own shadow, was once expostulated with by his rider in a very serious and pathetical manner: What a duce ails you? says he: It is only a shadow that you boggle at: And what is that shadow, but so much air that the light cannot come at? It has neither teeth, nor claws, you see, nor any thing else to hurt you: It will neither break your shins nor block up your passage; and what are you afraid of then? You do well to upbraid me, indeed, says the horse, who are as much terrified at the thoughts of sprights,

ghosts, and goblins, mere phantoms and chimeras of your own brains, as I am at my shadow.

MORAL.

It is a common theory for people to blame in others what they practise themselves.

REFLECTION.

In justice, charity, and prudence, we should make no other use of our neighbour's faults, than we do of a looking-glass, to mend our own manners by, and to set matters right at home. When we see a horse start at a shadow, what have we more to do, than to contemplate the folly and vanity of our own surprises and mistakes in a thousand instances of the same quality? For what are all the vexatious transports of our hopes and fears, extravagant wishes, and vain desires, but the images of things every whit as whimsical as the vision of the shadow in the fable?

FAB. 205. FLATTERY UNRESTRAINABLE.

LONG had the base and sordid vice of flattery reigned in the world with impunity; till at last, by a rigorous decree of all the gods, it was ordered to be punished with death, and commissioners were named to see the law put in execution. Six months had passed, and flattery was as bold and busy as ever, and yet not one complaint against it. Spies and informers were hereupon set at work, who at last brought an author before the court as a delinquent, for having given to a certain great courtier qualities to which he was known to be utterly a stranger; such as wit, honour, virtue, and the like. The prisoner confessed, that he had indeed attributed those virtues to the gentleman; and appealed to himself, whether he had wronged him or not? The courtier not only acquitted the man, but reflected desperately upon the scandalous practice of the court itself, in making that to be flattery, which, upon the whole matter, was no other than truth and justice. The commission was hereupon discharged; for they found it utterly impracticable to punish a fault which nobody would either acknowledge or complain of.

MORAL.

MORAL.

It is nothing but self-love that provokes and incites flattery; and the disposition of one man to receive it, encourages another to give it.

REFLECTION.

It is a thing utterly impossible for human wisdom to form such an act of state as shall reach the wickedness of the mind. As, who shall pretend to inflict any punishment upon flattery, hypocrisy, and other sins of the heart, when there lies no proof against them? One may be a very honest man in the eye of the law, and yet a most abominable wretch in the sight of God and of his own conscience. But still it is worth while to consider how we may discountenance and prevent those evils which the law can take no cognizance of. And to gain this point the effect must be obviated in the cause. Flattery can never corrupt any man who does not flatter himself first; for it is a vain opinion of ourselves that lays us open to be imposed upon by others.

FAB. 206. A DOG AND HIS MASTER.

A VIGILANT dog was once taken to task by his master, for barking indiscriminately at every one in the night that came within hearing. Sir, says the mastiff, it is out of the zeal I have for your service; and yet though I bark at every one I hear, when you tell me I should only bark at an ill man, I dare say I bark right nine times in ten.

MORAL.

The history of cheats and sharpers, truly written, would be no other than the history of human nature.

REFLECTION.

It goes to the heart of a faithful servant, when he has done his uttermost for his master's service, to fall under the scandalous character of officious, and impertinent, for his pains. The cardinal's rule to one of his lacqueys, who had lost his coat, comes very well to our present purpose. The boy said his eminence told him they were so holy at Rome, that he thought there had been no thieves there. Well, says the cardinal, but hereafter, whenever you come into a strange place, you may take every man you see for a thief, provided that you call no-

body so. The dog went this way to work, and did wisely in it; for he that keeps himself upon his guard shall never be cozened.

FAB. 207. AN ASS CARRYING AN IMAGE.

An ass carrying an image in procession, the people fell every-where down upon their knees before him. This silly animal began to erect his ears, and look big, fancying that they worshipped him all this while; till one put him right, saying, Friend, you are the very same ass with a burden upon your back, that you was before you took it up; and it is not the brute they bow to, but the image.

MORAL.

Some persons vainly attribute to themselves, as their own due, the honours paid them on account of those they serve or represent.

REFLECTION.

The simple vanity of this ass is a very pertinent reproof to all such men in office or authority, as without merit assume to themselves that regard which is paid to them on account of the office only. Many a clergyman, we are sorry to say it, has brought upon the sacred function a good deal of discredit, by thus attributing to his own person, whether he deserves it or not, the reverence paid to his function; and, by aiming at more than becomes him, has met with less than belongs to him, and has fallen into that contempt which will ever be the lot of pride and arrogance.

FAB. 208. A DOG AND A CAT.

Never were two creatures better together than a dog and a cat brought up in the same house, from a whelp and a kitten; so kind, so gamesome, and diverting, that it was half the entertainment of the family to see the gambols and love-tricks that passed betwixt them. Only it was observed, that still at meal-times, when any scraps fell from the table, or a bone was thrown to them, they would be snarling and spitting at one another under the table like the worst of foes.

MORAL.

Self-interest is the bone that, in some degree or other, sets all mortals together by the ears.

REFLECTION.

Here is a perfect emblem of the practices and friendships of the world. We contract little likings, enter into agreeable conversations, and pass away the time so merrily and kindly together, that one would think it impossible for any thing under the sun to break the interest; and yet upon the throwing in any cross interest among us, which is all one with the bone under the table, nay, upon a jealous thought, or a mistaken word or look, all former bonds are cancelled, the league broken, and the farce concludes in biting and scratching one another's eyes out. The same figure will serve for princes and states, public persons and private, married and single; people, in fine, of all professions, and pretences.

FAB. 209. A MASTIFF AND AN ASS.

A HUGE bear-dog, and an ass laden with bread, were upon a long journey together: They were both very hungry, and while the ass was grazing upon thistles by the way-side, the dog desired some of the bread which he carried. The ass made answer, That what he carried was another's, and not his, and he had no power to dispose of any of it. While this passed, up comes a wolf toward them. The ass fell a trembling, and told the dog, he hoped he would stand by him if the wolf should set upon him. No, says the dog, they that will eat alone, shall even fight alone too, for me; and so he left his fellow-traveller at the mercy of the wolf.

MORAL.

Though self-defence and preservation is the main end of society, yet we ought not to purchase our own safety or convenience with the goods that do not belong to us.

REFLECTION.

The dog in the fable acts here the part of a selfish man, who will accompany any ass for the hope of sharing in his bread panniers. But when he finds he cannot serve himself in his sordid views, with a scornful sneer he gives up all his pretended friendship. The ass was an honest creature in this instance, who being intrusted with

with a load of bread, contented himself, though as hungry as the dog, to feed upon thistles by the way-side, rather than betray his trust. He would not purchase the friendship of the dog upon such terms; and when he saw his danger, and the dog upon the point of leaving him to the mercy of the wolf, he nevertheless held fast his integrity, and offered not, though for his own safety, to bribe the sordid dog with what he himself had no right to.

FAB. 210. A WOMAN AND DEATH.

A GOOD woman was out of her wits in a manner for fear of losing her husband. The good man was sick and given over, and nothing would serve the turn, but death must needs take her instead of him. She called and prayed, and prayed and called, till at last death presented himself in a horrible shape at her elbow. She very civilly dropt him a curt'sy: And, *Pray, Sir*, says she, *do not mistake yourself; for the person that you come for lies in the bed there.*

MORAL.

It is a common thing to talk of dying for a friend; but when it comes to the push once, it is mere talk; and Self *becomes so predominant, that we scruple not to make the most valuable sacrifices, rather than go ourselves, if we could help it.*

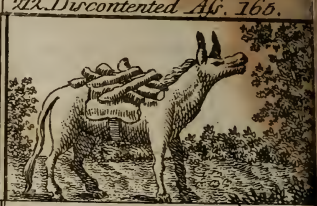
REFLECTION.

Charity, says the proverb, *begins at home*; and when all is done, no man loves a friend so well, but he loves himself better. There are no people more startled at death, than those that have gotten a custom of calling for it. *Oh, that Death would deliver me!* says one. *Oh, that Death would take me in the place of my dear husband!* says another; but when death comes to present himself indeed, and to take them at their words, the good wife very civilly puts the change upon him, and tells him, that the person he comes for lies in the bed there. So the old man, weary of his life, when death came at his call, only wanted to be helped up with his bundle of sticks. In few words, to call for death in jest, is vain and foolish: To call for it in earnest, is impious: And to call for it at all, is both ridiculous and

Fab. 211. Wolf & sick Ass. 165.



212. Discontented Ass. 166.



213. Boar & Fox. p. 167.



214. Wolf & Porcupine. 167.



215. Impertinent Visitor. 168.



216. Splenetic Traveller. 169.



217. Undutifull Son. 170.



218. Jupiter & Farmer. 171.



219. Joy & Sorrow. 172.



220. Countryman & Ass. 173.



and needleſs; for death will moſt certainly come at his appointed time, whether he be called or no; and that generally before he is welcome.

FAB. 211. A WOLF AND A SICK ASS.

A WOLF made a viſit to an aſs, that lay ill of a violent fever. He felt his pulſe very gingerly: And pray, my good friend, ſays he, whereabouts is your greateſt pain? Oh, gently, ſays the aſs; for it pricks me juſt there ſtill where you lay your finger!

MORAL.

The charity of death-bed viſits, from many perſons, is much at a rate with that of a carrion-crow to a ſheep; they ſmell a carcaſe.

REFLECTION.

Sick biſhops, or benefic'd clergymen, ſick office-holders, ſick poſſeſſors of eſtates, ſick commiſſioners, &c. have many ſuch inquirers after their ſtate of health, as the wolf in the fable: And, with the poor dying aſs, the afflicted valetudinarian cannot but find ſuch compliments an aggravation of his malady; as he well knows, that his recovery would be the moſt unacceptable piece of news that could happen to thoſe gaping expectants. His natural deſires of life muſt therefore be augmented by the hopes of diſappointing thoſe wolfiſh inquirers after his health.

FAB. 212. THE DISCONTENTED ASS.

AN aſs in a hard winter, wiſhed for a little warm weather, and a mouthful of freſh graſs to nap upon, in exchange for a heartleſs truſs of ſtraw, and a cold lodging. In good time the warm weather and the freſh graſs came on; but ſo much toil and buſineſs along with it, that the aſs grows quickly as ſick of the ſpring as he was of the winter. He next longs for ſummer; and when that comes, finds his toils and drudgery greater than in the ſpring; and then he fancies he ſhall never be well till autumn comes: But there again, what with carrying apples, grapes, feul, winter proviſions, and ſuch like, he finds himſelf in a greater hurry than ever. In fine, when he has trod the circle of the year in a courſe of reſtleſs labour, his laſt prayer is for winter again, and that he may but take up his reſt where he began his complaint.

MORAL.

MORAL.

The life of an unſteady man runs away in a courſe of vain wiſhes and unprofitable diſcontent: An unſettled mind can never be at reſt. There is no ſeaſon without its buſineſs.

REFLECTION.

There is no meaſure to be taken of an unſteady mind; but ſtill it is either too much or too little, too ſoon or too late. The love of novelty begets and increaſes the love of novelty; and the oftener we change, the more dangerous and troubleſome do we find this itch of variety to be. The aſs was ſick of the winter; ſicker yet of the ſpring; more ſick ſtill of the ſummer; and ſickeſt of all of the autumn; till he is brought, in the end, to compound for his firſt condition again; and ſo take up with that for his ſatisfaction, which he reckoned upon before for his misfortune.

Thus it is, when fickle and fooliſh people will be preſcribing to, and refining upon the wiſe and gracious appointments of the Maker of the world. They know not what they *are*, and they know not what they *would be*, any farther, than that they would not be what *they are*. Let their preſent ſtate in the world be what it will, there is ſtill ſomething or other in it that makes their lives weariſome: And they are as peeviſh company to themſelves too, as they are to their friends and neighbours; for there is not one circumſtance in nature, but they ſhall find matters to pick a quarrel at: The *preſent* is only the courſe of ſo many moments into time *to come*: Were it not better then for people at firſt to ſit down contentedly in the poſt where Providence has placed them, and *to do their duty in that ſtate of life*, as they are early and excellently taught, *to which it has pleaſed God to call them*, than be forced to do it at laſt, by the dear-bought experience of their follies?

This, however, we ſay, not to bar honeſt induſtry, or a ſober application to thoſe ſtudies or means that may probably contribute to the mending of a man's fortune; provided that he ſet up his reſolution beforehand, not to let himſelf down below the dignity of a wiſe man, be the iſſue of his endeavours what it will. For he that is not content at *preſent*, carries the ſame weakneſs

weakneſs along with him to the *next remove*; and whoever either paſſionately covets any thing that he has not, or feels himſelf glutted with a ſatiety of what he poſſeſſes, has already loſt his hold: So that, if we would be happy, we muſt fix upon ſome foundation that can never deceive us, and govern ourſelves by the meaſures of ſobriety and juſtice. All the reſt is but the aſs's circulation of more and more anxiety and trouble.

FAB. 213. A BOAR AND A FOX.

AS a boar was whetting his teeth againſt a tree, up comes a fox to him. Pray, what do you mean by that? ſays he. I do it, ſays the boar, to be in readineſs in caſe of an attack by an enemy. But, replies the fox, I ſee no occaſion for it, for there is no enemy near you. Well, ſays the boar, but I ſee occaſion for it; for when I come once to be ſet upon, it will be too late for me to be whetting when I ſhould be fighting.

FAB. 214. A WOLF AND A PORCUPINE.

A WOLF had a mind to be dealing with a porcupine, if he could but get him diſarmed firſt of his prickles or quills, which he can dart at his enemy; and ſo he told the porcupine, That it did not look well for people, in a time of peace, to go armed, as if they were in a ſtate of war. Lay, therefore, ſays he, your briſtles aſide, for you may take them up at pleaſure. Do *you* talk of a ſtate of war? ſays the porcupine: Why, that's my preſent caſe, and the very reaſon why I ſhould ſtand to my arms; for am I not in the company of a wolf?

MORAL of the two Fables.

No man, or ſtate, can be ſafe in peace, that is not always upon guard, and in readineſs to encounter an enemy in caſe of war.

REFLECTION.

It is a piece of good counſel in all the affairs of human life, to take care of ſecuring ourſelves, that we may not be either betrayed or ſurpriſed, eſpecially by the wolves and foxes of the world. All the duties of government and ſociety; nay, all offices, civil and religious,

religious, where prudence, conſcience, or common faith, are concerned, have their proper ſeaſons. It is too late to hinder miſchief, when the opportunity is once paſt; and therefore the timing of things is a main point in the diſpatch of all affairs. There can be no ſafe or ſure peace, where people are not always in readineſs for war; for the common well-being of mankind does not ſo much depend upon the faith of men and of governments, as upon the temporary and contingent occaſions of breaking the peace with advantage. It is not public juſtice alone, that can uphold a government, without the aid of policy and counſel. Men do naturally indulge thoſe opinions and practices that favour their pretenſions; and it is too much to ſuperadd powerful temptations to do wrong, to the force of vitious inclinations to do it. The boar's whetting his teeth, was only an act of neceſſary precaution for fear of the worſt: And the porcupine did wiſely too, in keeping himſelf upon his guard, when the enemy was in view.

FAB. 215. AN IMPERTINENT AND PHILOSOPHER.

A CERTAIN pragmatical, gay, fluttering coxcomb, would needs make a viſit to a philoſopher. He found him alone in his ſtudy, and fell a wondering how he could endure to lead ſo ſolitary a life. Sir, ſays the philoſopher, you are exceedingly miſtaken, for I was in very good company till you came in.

MORAL.

What the noiſy and moſt numerous part of the world calls good company, is generally the moſt irkſome and inſipid thing in the world to a wiſe man; a mere round of folly and impertinence, and void of any kind of inſtruction or benefit to a reflecting mind. How preferable to ſuch a man muſt it be, to converſe with the learned dead, rather than the unedifying and noiſy living.

REFLECTION.

It is one of the moſt vexatious mortifications, perhaps of a ſober and ſtudious man's life, to have his thoughts diſordered, and the chain of his reaſon diſcompoſed, by the importunity of a tedious and impertinent viſit; eſpecially if it be from a fool of quality, where the ſtation of the man intitles him to all returns

turns of good manners and respect. The drift of this fable is to tell us, that good books and good thoughts are the best company, and that they alone are mistaken, who think a wise man can ever be alone. It prepares us also to expect interruptions and disappointments, and to provide for them; but withall to take the best care we can to prevent the plague of ill company, by avoiding the occasions of it. The linking of a man of brains and honesty with a lewd, insipid companion, is effectually the emblem of that tyrant, who bound the living and the dead together; and yet this is it which the impertinent takes for the relief of solitude, and that he calls company.

FAB. 216. THE SPLENETIC TRAVELLER.

A SPLENETIC and a facetious man were once upon a journey: The former went slugging on with a thousand cares and troubles in his head, exclaiming over and over, Lord, what shall I do to live? The other jogged merrily away, and left his matters to Providence and good fortune. Well, brother, says the sorrowful wight, how can you be so frolic now? As I am a sinner, my heart is even ready to break for fear I should want bread. Come, come, says the other, fall back, fall edge, I have fixed my resolution, and my mind is at rest. Ay, but for all that, says the other, I have known the confidence of as resolute people as yourself has deceived them in the conclusion; and so the poor man fell into another fit of doubting and musing, till he started out of it all on a sudden: Good sirs! says he, what if I should fall blind? And so he walked a good way before his companion with his eyes shut, to try how it would be, if that misfortune should befall him. In this interim, his fellow-traveller, who followed him, found a purse of money upon the way, which rewarded his trust in Providence; whereas the other missed that encounter as a punishment of his distrust: for the purse had been his, as he went first, if he had not put himself out of condition of seeing it.

MORAL.

He that commits himself to Providence, is sure of a friend in time of need; while an anxious distrust of the divine Goodness, makes a man more and more unworthy

of it; and miserable before-hand, for fear of being so afterwards.

REFLECTION.

The two opposite humours of a cheerful trust in Providence, and a suspicious diffidence of it, with the ordidary effects and consequences of the one and the other, are very well set forth here for our instruction and comfort. The Divine Goodness never fails those that depend upon it, provided that, according to the advice of Hercules to the *carter*, they put their own shoulders to the work.

The most wretched sort of people under the sun are your dreamers upon events, your low-spirited foreboders, suppossers, and putters of cases: They are still calculating within themselves, What if this or that calamity, judgment, or disaster, should befall them? And so they really suffer the evils they dread most. It is very certain, that what we *fear*, we *feel*; besides, that fancy breeds misery as naturally as it does the small-pox. Set a whimsical head once agog upon sprights and goblins, and he will be ready to squirt his wits at his own shadow. There is no surer remedy for this superstitious and desponding weakness, than first to govern ourselves by the best improvement of that reason which Providence has given us for a guide; and then, when we have done our own parts, to commit all cheerfully, for the rest, to the good pleasure of Heaven, with trust and resignation. Why should not I as well comfort myself with the *hope* of what may be, as torment myself with the *fear* of it? He that distrusts God's providence, does effectually put himself out of his protection.

FAB. 217. THE UNDUTIFUL YOUNG LION.

AMONG other good counsels that an old experienced lion gave to his whelp, this was one; That he should never contend with a man: For, says he, if ever you do, you will be worsted. The little lion gave his father the hearing, and kept the advice in his thought, but it never went near his heart. When he came to be grown up afterward, and in the flower of his strength and vigour, about he ranges to look for a man to grapple with. In his ramble he met with a yoke of oxen, and then with a horse

a horſe, ſaddled and bridled, and ſeverally aſked them if they were men; but they ſaying they were not, he goes after this to one that was cleaving of blocks: Do ye hear? ſays the lion, you ſeem to be a man. And a man I am, ſays the fellow. That is well, quoth the lion; and dare you fight with me? Yes, ſays the man, I dare: Why, I can tear all theſe blocks to pieces, you ſee. Put your feet now into this gap, where you ſee an iron thing there, and try what you can do. The lion preſently put his paws into the gaping of the wood, and with one luſty pluck, made it give way, and out drops the wedge; the wood immediately cloſing upon it, there was the lion caught by the toes. The wood-man preſently upon this raiſes the country, and the lion finding what a ſtrait he was in, gave one hearty twitch, and got his feet out of the trap, but left his claws behind him. So away he goes back to his father, all lame and bloody, with this confeſſion in his mouth; Alas! my dear Father, ſays he, this had never been, if I had followed your advice.

MORAL.

The vengeance of Heaven, ſooner or later, treads upon the heels of wilful diſobedience to parents.

REFLECTION.

Children are not to reaſon upon obedience to parents, provided there be nothing in the command, or in the impoſition, that is ſimply evil; for headſtrong and undutiful children ſeldom eſcape a remarkable puniſhment, which gives them reaſon to ſay to their parents, *This had never been, if I had followed your advice.*

FAB. 218. JUPITER AND A FARMER.

A FARMER ſupplicated Jupiter, that he might have the ordering of the air and the ſeaſons in his own grounds as he thought fit. Jupiter, to puniſh him for his preſumption, granted his requeſt; and he had heat and cold, calms and winds, wet and dry, as he pleaſed: But he ordered the matter ſo ill, having ſometimes too little, and ſometimes too much of the one ſort or the other, that hardly any thing proſpered with him, and he had ten times worſe crops than his neighbours, though he took ten times the pains that they did: So that at laſt,

being quite tired out with changing his seasons, and watching the effects thereof night and day, he petitioned Jupiter to relieve him from his cares, and to take back again the conduct of the seasons into his own hands.

MORAL.

We ought to make it a petition, that in many cases Heaven would be so gracious to us, as not to hear our prayers; for we are otherwise in danger to be undone by our own wishes.

REFLECTION.

There must be no prescribing of rules to the Divine Wisdom. What a confusion would it bring upon mankind, if all those people who are unsatisfied with the motions, revolutions, and influences of the celestial orbs, the course of the seasons, and the providential distribution of heats and cold, rain, frosts, and sunshine, might be allowed to take the government into their own hands! Our duty is to confine our wishes and desires to the will of Providence, who knows best what is fittest for us; and who would frequently punish us most, if it granted us what we prayed for.

FAB. 219. JOY AND SORROW.

Joy and Sorrow, two twin-sisters, once quarrelled vehemently who should have the preference; and being unable to decide the matter, left it to Minos to determine. He tried all means to make them agree, and go hand in hand together, as loving sisters ought; but finding his counsel had no effect upon them, he decreed that they should be linked together in a chain; and each of them in turn should be perpetually treading upon the heel of the other; and not a pin matter then, says he, which goes foremost.

MORAL.

No man is to presume in prosperity, or to despair in adversity; for good and ill fortune do as naturally succeed one another, as day and night.

REFLECTION.

It is the lot of mankind to be happy and miserable by turns. The wisdom of Providence will have it so; and it is exceedingly for our advantage, that so it should be. There is nothing pure and unmixed under the heavens; and

and if there were, such an abstracted simplicity would be neither nourishing nor profitable to us. By the mediation of this mixture, we have the comfort of hope to support us in our distresses, and the apprehensions of a change, to keep a check upon us in the very pride of our greatness: So that by this vicissitude of *good* and *evil* we are kept steady in our philosophy, and in our religion. The one minds us of God's omnipotence and justice; the other, of his goodness and mercy: The one tells us, there is no trusting to our own strength; the other preaches faith and resignation in the prospect of an over-ruling Providence that takes care of us. What is it but sickness that gives us a taste of health? bondage, the relish of liberty? And what but the experience of want, that enhances the value of plenty? That which we call ease, is only an indolency, or a freedom from pain; and there is no such thing as felicity or misery, but by comparison. It is very true, that hopes and fears are the snares of life in some respects, but they are the reliefs of it in others. Now for fear of the worst, however, on either hand every man has it in his power, by the force of natural reason, to avoid the danger of falling either into presumption or despair.

FAB. 220. A COUNTRYMAN AND AN ASS.

AS a countryman, in time of war, was grazing his ass in a meadow, comes a hot alarm, that the enemy was just at hand. The man calls presently to his ass, in a terrible fright, to scour away as fast as he could: For, says he, we shall be *taken* else. Well, quoth the ass, and what if we should be *taken?* I can but be a slave wherever I am: so that, *taken* or not *taken*, it is all a case to me.

MORAL.

Men in a fright, or alarmed with the apprehensions of some imminent danger to themselves, often fly for succour to those from whom they have not deserved any. It is prudent so to behave in our prosperity, as that we may make every one our friend in times of adversity: For no one is exempted from the mutability of fortune.

REFLECTION.

This fable may ſerve to ſhew us, that people in a ſtate of ſervitude or oppreſſion have little encouragement to exert themſelves either in favour or defence of their oppreſſors in times of danger. One would therefore think, that good policy and ſelf-intereſt ſhould induce all governors to ſtudy to make themſelves beloved by their ſubjects rather than hated; for when a people find their condition ſo bad, that it cannot well be worſe, they will think it an experiment worth trying, whether the yoke of another governor will not ſit lighter on their ſhoulders, than that which has galled their necks for a ſeries of years. Let the matter fall out as it will, as they are already ſlaves, they can be no worſe, let who will be their maſter.

FAB. 221. SEAMEN PRAYING TO SAINTS.

In a terrible tempeſt at ſea, one ſeaman took notice, that the reſt of his fellows were praying ſeverally to ſo many ſaints. Have a care, my maſters, ſays he, what you do; for what if we ſhould all be drowned now before the meſſenger can deliver his errand? Would it not be better, without going ſo far about, to pray to Him that can ſave us without help?

MORAL.

A wiſe man will take the neareſt and ſureſt way to obtain his end, and to commit no buſineſs of importance to a proxy, where he may do it himſelf.

REFLECTION.

What needs any man make his court to the ſervant, ſays Sir Roger L'Eſtrange, when his acceſs is open to the maſter? And eſpecially when that maſter is as ready to give, as the petitioner to aſk?

With regard to ſecular matters, we are told a pleaſant ſtory of one of our princes, King Charles II. He had often obſerved a country gentleman attending to ſpeak with one of his firſt miniſters; and once paſſing through the apartment were the gentleman happened to be alone, he aſked him his buſineſs. He told him, That he was attending for his miniſter, as he had often done, for ſuch a poſt in his majeſty's gift. The king aſked him, What he was to give for it to the miniſter? He ſaid 1000l. The king humorouſly told him, He ſhould have

have it, and bid him give him 500*l.* and keep the other 500*l.* himself; and if he or his friends wanted any more such bargains, he might apply to *himself* directly, and be served at half price.

FAB. 222. IMPRACTICABLE LEAGUE.

THE beasts entered into a league with the fishes against the birds. The war was declared; but the fishes, instead of their *quota*, send their excuse, That they were not able to march by land.

MORAL.

There is no contracting of alliances with those who are out of possibility of assisting in a time of need. And those contracts are void in themselves, that pretend to oblige us against nature.

REFLECTION.

In all contracts, whether of public alliance and commerce, or particular friendship, there must a regard be had to reciprocal aid and assistance, in case of any distress; so that all the circumstances of ability, disposition, situation, interest, &c. must be taken into thought, and rightly understood before the bargain be struck. We have seen an instance something like this in our time: The Russians engage to assist the Emperor with 20,000 men against the common enemy the Turks: The kingdom of Poland, a neuter in the war, lies between the two high contractors, and the Poles refuse the Russians a passage thro' their territories to join the Emperor. Should not this have been thought of and provided against, before the Emperor engaged in that war at the instigation of Russians?

FAB. 223. AGE TO BE HONOURED.

A PERT and inconsiderate young man happened to meet an old man, whose age and infirmity had brought his body almost to the shape of a bent bow. Pray, father, says he, will you sell your bow? Save your money, you fool, says the other; for when you come to my years, you shall have such a bow for nothing.

MORAL.

There cannot be a greater folly and impertinence, than that of young men scoffing at the infirmities of age, which cannot

cannot be avoided but by dying young; and such may be said not to deserve to live to long life.

REFLECTION.

We are all born to die, and it is every jot as certain that we shall go out of the world, as that we are already come into it; we are helpless in infancy, ungovernable in youth; our strength and vigour scarce out-last a morning sun; our infirmities hasten upon us as our years advance, and we grow as helpless in our old age as in our infancy: What then have the best of us to boast of: Even time and human frailty alone will bring us to our end, without the help of any accidents or distempers; so that our decays are as much the works of nature, as the first principles of our being; and the young man's conceit of the crooked bow here, is no better than an irreverent way of making sport with the course of Providence; besides shewing the folly of scoffing at that in another, which he himself was sure to come to at last, or worse.

FAB. 224. A BEAR AND A BEE.

A BEAR was so enraged at the stinging of a bee, that he ran like mad into the bee-garden, and over-turned all the hives in revenge. This outrage brought them out in troops upon him; and when he was almost stung to death, he came to bethink himself, how much more adviseable it had been to pass over one injury, than by an unprofitable passion to provoke a thousand,

MORAL.

It is better to pass over an affront from one scoundrel, than to draw the whole herd of the mobile about a man's ears.

REFLECTION.

We are to learn from hence the folly of an impotent and inconsiderate anger; and that there is no creature so contemptible, but by the help of resolution, and of numbers, it may gain its point. The heat and thirst of revenge does but hurry people from less mischiefs to greater; as one hasty word or blow brings on a thousand. There is no opposing the torrent of a headstrong multitude; for rage and despair give courage to the most inconsiderable and the most fearful

ful of creatures. Had it not been better for the bear to have paſſed over the affront of one ſpiteful bee, than to provoke and draw upon himſelf the outrage of a thouſand?

FAB. 225. HUNTSMAN AND CURRIER.

A HUNTSMAN told a currier, That he ſhould go out next day and kill a bear, and he would ſell him the ſkin. The currier agreed to pay him his price, and went out next day with the huntſman to the chace; and mounted a tree, where he might ſee the ſport. The huntſman advanced very bravely up to the den where the bear lay, and threw in his dogs upon him. He ruſhed out immediately, and the man miſſing hi aim, the bear overturned him. So the fellow held his breath, and lay ſtone-ſtill, as if he were dead. The bear ſnuffled, and ſmelt to him, and took him for a carcaſe, and ſo left him. When the bear was gone and the danger over, down comes the currier from the tree, and bade the huntſman riſe. Hark ye, my friend, ſays the currier, the bear whiſpered ſomewhat in your ear: What was it, I pr'ythee? Oh, ſays the huntſman, he bade me have a care for the future, to make ſure of the bear before I ſell his ſkin.

MORAL.

Let no man undertake for what is out of his power; for there is no depending upon uncertainties, or upon what a to-morrow may bring forth.

REFLECTION.

In the days of ſtock-jobbing many ſuch a bargain as this has been ſtruck, and it is from this fable probably, that ſuch were called *bears* and *bulls*.

To make a ſerious application of this apologue, we may obſerve, with Sir Roger L'Eſtrange, that it is much at this rate that we wretched mortals make all our bargains: We give our time, ſtudy, intereſt, and liberty; and, in ſhort, part with all that is precious, not only upon uncertainties, but for things we can never obtain: And have only this cruel reflection left us, when it is too late, That we ought to have built our hopes and expectations on a more ſolid and durable foundation.

FAB. 226. NO PLEASING EVERY-BODY.

An old man and a little boy were driving an aſs before them to the next market to ſell. Why, have you no more wit, ſays one to the man upon the way, than you and your ſon to trudge it a-foot, and let the aſs go light? So the man ſet the boy upon the aſs, and footed it himſelf. Why, ſirrah, ſays another after this, to the boy, you lazy rogue you, muſt you ride, and let your ancient father go a-foot? The man, upon this, took down his boy, and got up himſelf. D'ye ſee, ſays a third, how the lazy old knave rides himſelf, and the poor little child has much ado to creep after him! The father, upon this, took up his ſon behind him. The next they met, aſked the old man, whether the aſs were his own or no? He ſaid, yes. Troth, there's little ſign of it, ſays the other, by your loading him thus. Well, ſays the fellow to himſelf, What am I to do now? For I am laughed at, if either the aſs be light, or if one of us rides, or both; and ſo, in the concluſion, he bound the aſs's legs together with a cord, and they tried to carry him to market with a pole upon their ſhoulders betwixt them. This was ſport to every-body that ſaw it, inſomuch that the old fellow in great wrath threw down the aſs into a river, and ſo went his way home again. The good man, in fine, was willing to pleaſe every-body, but had the ill fortune to pleaſe no-body, and loſe his aſs into the bargain.

MORAL.

He that reſolves not to go to bed till all the world is pleaſed, ſhall be troubled with the head-ach.

REFLECTION.

No man can be either happy or ſecure, that governs himſelf by the humour and opinion of others. It is a thing utterly impoſſible to pleaſe all: And none but a mad man will endeavour it. What then has a wiſe man to do in this caſe, but to diſtinguiſh what is right and fit, and then act up to the dictates of a good conſcience, and not value what the world ſays of him, or his actions? It is true, a prudent man, ſhould, if he can fairly and honeſtly, endeavour to gain every-body's good word; and ought to avoid making himſelf enemies, or to give juſt grounds to the buſy cenſures of others;

others: But, after all, as it is impoſſible to pleaſe every one, he muſt judge for himſelf; for it is by his own actions, and his own judgment, that he muſt ſtand or fall. We have given the above fable, in the very words of Sir Roger, becauſe it is ſo well penned, that it cannot be either mended or abridged, though we have taken ſome liberty in the reflection upon it; and, we preſume to think, not for the worſe.

FAB. 227. JUPITER'S TWO WALLETS.

When Jupiter firſt made man, he gave him two ſatchels, one for his neighbour's faults, which he directed ſhould be thrown behind him; the other for his own, which he ordered him to carry always in view before him. But the new-made man perverſely inverted the direction; for he threw his own behind, and carried his neighbour's before him; and ſo became quick-ſighted to his neighbour's failings, and blind to his own.

MORAL.

Every man living is partial in his own caſe; but it is the humour of mankind to have our neighbour's faults always in our eyes, and to caſt our own over our ſhoulders, out of ſight.

REFLECTION.

We are here admoniſhed of a double fault; want of charity and juſtice towards others, and want of a Chriſtian ſcrutiny and examination into ourſelves: So that here is the ſin of detraction, in making other people worſe than they are; and the ſin of pride and hypocriſy, in boaſting ourſelves to be better.

We live like ſpendthrifts, that know themſelves to be deſperately in debt, and dare not look into their accounts to ſee how the reckoning ſtands. Nay, it is the caſe of too many of us, that we keep no books neither; or at the beſt, do not know where to find them. Self-love is ſtill attended with a contempt of others, and a common miſtake of matters at home as well as abroad; for we keep regiſters of our neighbours faults, and none of their good deeds; and no memorials all this while of what we do amiſs ourſelves. *I am not as this publican*, is the very top of our righteouſneſs.

Thus

Thus goes the world, and a lewd practice it is, for one man to value himself upon the wickedness of another: But the worst of all is yet behind; that is to say, to think ourselves safe, so long as we keep our iniquities from the knowledge of men, and out of our own view and memory, without any awe of that Justice which never sleeps, and of that All-seeing Eye and Wisdom which observes all our misdoings, and from which nothing can be hid.

FAB. 228. A MERCHANT AND MARINER.

A MERCHANT at sea asked the ship's master, What death his father died? He told him, that his father, his grandfather, and his great grandfather, were all drowned. Well, says the merchant, and are not you yourself afraid of being drowned too? Pray, says the skipper, What death did your father, grandfather, and great grandfather die? Why, they died all in their beds, says the merchant. Very good, says the skipper; and why should I be any more afraid of going to sea, than you are of going to bed?

MORAL.

He that troubles his head with drawing frightful consequences from mere contingencies, shall never be at rest: And this is farther to mind us, that in an honest course of life, we are not to fear death.

REFLECTION.

It is much in our own power, says Sir Roger L'Estrange, how to live, but not at all, when or how to die: So that our part is only to submit to Providence, and to bid death welcome at what time, and in what place or manner soever it shall please God to send it. The reason and the doctrine of this fable are clear, strong, and edifying: We are either not to fear death at all, or to fear it every moment of our lives; nay, and in all the forms that it ever appeared in; which will put us to such a stand, that we shall not dare even to *live* for fear of *dying*. We must neither eat, nor drink, nor breathe, nor sleep, if we come once to boggle at precedents, and at the doing of those things over again, that ever any man died of before. There is not one instant of life, in fine, but may be our last; besides that we live not only in the daily danger of death, but in a continual certainty

certainty of it: So that the question is not *how*, or of *what*, this or that man died, but the inevitable fate and mortality of mankind. One man dies in his bed, another at sea, a third in the field; this man of one accident or distemper, that of another. And what is there more in all this now, than so many several ways to the same journey's end? There is no such preservative against the fear of death, as the conscience of a *good life*; and if we would have it *easy*, we must make the thought of it *familiar* to us.

FAB. 229. EAGLE, CAT, AND SOW.

An eagle, a cat, and a sow, bred in a wood together. The eagle timbered upon the top of an high oak; the cat kittened in the hollow trunk of it; and the sow lay pigging at the bottom. The cat, set upon mischief, went with her tale to the eagle: Your majesty had best look to yourself, says pus; for there is most certainly a plot against you, and, perchance, upon poor me too; for yonder is a sow lies grubbing every day at the root of this tree; she will bring it down at last, and then your little ones and mine are all at mercy. So soon as ever she had hammered a jealousy into the head of the eagle, away to the sow she goes: Little do you think, says she, what danger your litter is in; there is an eagle watching constantly upon this tree to make a prey of your pigs, and so soon as ever you are out of the way, she will certainly execute her design. The cat, upon this, goes presently to her kittens again, keeping herself upon her guard all day, as if she were afraid, and steals out still at night to provide for her family. In one word, the eagle durst not stir for fear of the sow; and the sow durst not budge for fear of the eagle: So that they kept themselves upon their guard till they were starved, and left the care of their children to pus and her kittens.

MORAL.

There can be no peace in any state or family, where whisperers and tale-bearers are encouraged.

REFLECTION.

Busy-bodies and intermeddlers are a dangerous sort of people to have to do withall; for there is no mischief that may not be wrought by the craft and manage of a

double tongue, with a foolish credulity to work upon. There is hardly a greater pest to government, to conversation, to the peace of societies, relations, and families, than officious tale-bearers, and busy intermeddlers. These pick-thanks are enough to set mankind together by the ears; they live upon calumny and slander, and cover themselves too under the seal of secrecy and friendship: These are the people who *set their neighbours houses on fire to roast their own eggs*. The sin of traducing is diabolical, according to the very letter; and if the office be artificially managed, it is enough to put the whole world into a flame, and no body the wiser which way it came. The mischief may be promoted, by misrepresenting, misunderstanding, or misinterpreting, our neighbour's thoughts, words, and deeds; and no wound so mortal, as that where the poison works under a pretence of kindness: Nay, there are ways of commendation, and insinuations of affection and esteem, that kill a man as sure as a bullet. This practice is the bane of trust and confidence; and it is as frequent in the intrigues of courts and states, as in the most ordinary accidents of life. It is enough to break the neck of all honest purposes, to stifle all generous and public-spirited motions, and to suppress all honourable inclinations in the very conception. But, next to the practice of these lewd offices, deliver all honest men, say I, from lying at the mercy of those that encourage and entertain them.

FAB. 230. A RUSTIC AND A RIVER.

A STUPID rustic, sent to market with butter and cheese, by the good old woman his mother, made a stop at a river in the way, and laid himself down upon the bank, in expectation that it would soon run out. About midnight home he goes to his mother, with all his market-trade, back again. Why, how now, son, says she, what have we here to do? Why, mother, says the booby, yonder is a scurvy river that has been running all this day, and I staid till just now for the running of it out, and there it is running still!

MORAL.



Fab. 231. Arbitrary Eagle. 183.



232. Imprudent Landlord. 183.



233. Bull & Gnat. P. 184.



234. Traveller & Grasshoppers. 185.



235. Eagle & Rabbets, 186.



236. Partridges & Setting Dog 186.



237. Lame Man & Blind. 188.



238. Three Pretended Penitents. 188.



239. Disappointed Milkmaid. 190.



240. No to Morrow. P. 191.



MORAL.

We are not to expect that nature will change her course to accommodate us, or to gratify the sickly freak of every fantastical humour.

REFLECTION.

This shews us the mischief and the danger of procrastination. The slothful and irresolute slip their opportunities in the very expectation of them. Some people are so unreasonably lazy, as to expect, that nature should rather go out of her course and way for their sakes, than they put themselves to the trouble of moving one step out of their own way for the sake of business. They will rather wait the running of the river dry, than take pains to look about for a bridge, or a ford. They never consider, that nature is a perpetual motion, and that the work of the universe circulates without any interval or repose. Why should not the sun sleep in the firmament, or stand still, to attend our affairs, as well as the rivers stop their courses, to give us passage?

FAB. 231. THE ARBITRARY EAGLE.

It was once put to the question among the birds, which of them was the greatest beauty. The eagle gave her voice for herself, and carried it: Yes, says a disappointed peacock, in a soft voice, by the bye, you are a great beauty indeed! but it lies in your beak and your talons, which make it death to dispute it.

MORAL.

The veneration that is usually paid to great and powerful men, who at the same time are not good men, is but from the teeth outward; *and more out of fear or flattery than love.*

REFLECTION.

The whole world, and the business of it, is managed by flattery, fear, or self-interest. Power, in short, is beauty, wit, courage, and all good things in one, where slaves and parasites are judges.

FAB. 232. AN IMPRUDENT YOUNG LANDLORD.

A foolish heir, that was just come to the possession of a wise man's estate, caused all the bushes and hedges about his vineyard to be grubbed up, because they

brought him no grapes. The throwing down of this hedge laid his ground open to man and beaſt, and all his plants were preſently deſtroyed. My ſimple young maſter came now to be convinced of his folly, in taking away the guard that preſerved his vines, and in expecting grapes from brambles.

MORAL.

There needs as much care and induſtry to the preſerving of things, as there does to the acquiring of them; and the centinel is as neceſſary to the common ſafety, as he that fights the battle.

REFLECTION.

This parable of the hedge and the vineyard, may be aptly enough expounded of the laws that ſecure a civil community. So long as the incloſure is kept up and maintained, the peace and the order of the public are provided for; but if it be ſuffered by neglect, either to fall to decay, or to be overborne by violence, and laid in common, the beaſts of the foreſt break into it, and of a vineyard it becomes a wilderneſs. So in other caſes, outward reſpect to tutors, parents, and governors, may be conſidered as the fence which is to be kept up inviolate; for if once undue familiarity is ſuffered to break in upon the requiſite diſtinctions, due from the governed to the governors, contempt will be the neceſſary conſequence, and there will be an end of all order, decorum, and improvement.

FAB. 233. A BULL AND A GNAT.

A GNAT that had placed himſelf upon the horn of a bull, very civily begged the bull's pardon for the liberty he took; but rather than incommode you, ſays he, by my weight, I will remove. Oh, never trouble your head for that, ſays the bull; for I never felt you when you ſat down, and I ſhall not miſs you when you riſe.

MORAL.

The vanity of this fly ſtrikes at an humour that we meet with every day in the world, in an hundred trifling idle people, that will be ſtill making themſelves more conſideable than they are.

REFLECTION.

All frivolous and impertinent pretenſions of civility are ſtruck at in this fable; and they well deſerve to be corrected;

corrected; for it is certainly one of the moſt nauſeous mortifications under the ſun, for a man of ſenſe and buſineſs to have to do with a preciſe, finical fop, who, too-too mannerly, does every thing, forſooth, by rule and compaſs: Eſpecially if it happen that his quality, relation, or authority, intitles him to outward reſpect and forbearance.

FAB. 234. TRAVELLER AND GRASSHOPPERS.

A PETULANT traveller one ſultry day, as he rode along, was ſo offended with the noiſe of graſshoppers in his ears, that in great wrath, he alighted from his horſe to kill them all. He fell a ſtamping upon ſome, and whipping at others, as long as the day laſted; and by that time had ſo fatigued himſelf, that he was forced to tie his horſe to a tree, and lie down among the ſtill-chirping inſects, with whoſe noiſe he had been ſo grievouſly offended.

MORAL.

Petulant and fretful men will be uneaſy at the moſt trifling accidents; as the peeviſh traveller here quarrelled even at the effects of that ſummer ſun, which enlivened all vegetable nature, and made birds, beaſts, and inſects, down to the very graſshopper, rejoice.

REFLECTION.

To take the fable in a ſtill more ſerious and general light, we may conſider the ſeveral ſtages of human life, as but one continued journey towards eternity: In which we too often ſuffer very trifling matters to put us beſide our duty. Every little incident, in ſhort, diverts us from that great work which ought moſt to employ our thoughts; and when we ſhould be attending the duties of reaſonable beings, we are frequently carried away by our headſtrong paſſions, like ſpaniels, which run out at check after daws and crows, without ever heeding their proper game.

FAB. 235. AN EAGLE AND RABBITS.

AN eagle drew a neſt of rabbits, and carried them away to her young. The mother rabbit adjured her, in the name of all thoſe powers that take care of the innocent and oppreſſed, to have compaſſion upon her miſerable children: But ſhe, in an outrage of pride and in-

dignation, tears them presently to pieces. All the rabbits upon this made a common cause of it, and fell to undermining the tree where the eagle timbered, which upon the first blast of wind fell flat to the ground, nest, and eagles, and all. Some of them were killed by the fall, the rest were devoured by birds and beasts of prey, in sight of the injured mother rabbit.

MORAL.

It is highly imprudent, even in the greatest of men, unnecessarily to provoke the meanest, when the pride of Pharaoh himself was brought down by miserable frogs and lice.

REFLECTION.

The most inconsiderate of creatures may at some time or other, by some means or other, come to revenge itself upon the greatest; not by its own force so much, as by the working of Divine Justice, that will not suffer oppression to pass unpunished. In cases of powerful injustice, the greatest are not to *presume*, nor the meanest to *despair*.

Here is power triumphing over weakness; a criminal cruelty over helpless innocence; and that cruelty inexorable too, and deaf to the tears, supplications, and importunities of a tender mother, on the behalf of her children. Now, for the humbling of this unmerciful pride in the eagle, Providence has found out a way, even by the most despicable of means and creatures, to the wreaking of a revenge: Which shews likewise, that Heaven takes the cause of the weak and the guiltless into a particular care, and that vengeance generally treads upon the heels of oppression.

FAB. 236. PARTRIDGES AND SETTING-DOG.

A covey of partridges in fear of poachers, made interest with a setting-dog to engage all others of his species to do them acts of friendship. He undertook upon his honour, that not a dog of his kind should hurt them: For, says he, we are resolved, so soon as ever we have any of your people in the wind, to fall down flat upon the ground, and look another way, without advancing one step further. Some few days after, the covey happened to spy this very spaniel abroad:

abroad with his master a-setting. The dog stopt all of a sudden, and made his point, and the poor birds were overjoyed to see the cur so true to his articles: But they did not consider, that the same signal served the falconer, as well as the partridges, who, drawing his net over them, took the whole covey.

MORAL.

This is the way of the world, and a great part of the business of it too. The knaves impose upon the fools, and the weaker are a prey to the stronger.

REFLECTION.

Innocent men, who, knowing no guile, suspect none, are often drawn into snares by artful and designing sharpers. The *Wisdom of the serpent* is too seldom mixed with the *Harmlessness of the dove*; and it ought to be a general rule with a guileless man to *trust less*, and *suspect more*, than such generally do; at least not to ground so much confidence in an untried pretender to friendship, as may subject him to ruinous and fatal consequences to either his person or fortune, in case of mistake. Nevertheless a man in charity should hope the best of every one; but then he should only *hope*, and not *confide* so much as may make a mistake irretrievable. Indeed, men who are indiscriminately jealous of the honesty of others, and who are naturally suspicious, are too generally bad themselves: for, knowing the corruptness of their own minds, they think every one like themselves: But yet there is a prudent caution to be had; and a man who has large professions made him of service and love, may very well say to himself; I have no reason to doubt the professions of my friend, and I will hope he sincerely means what he says: But, as wiser men than I have been deceived and cheated by persons from whom they least expected bad usage, I will not wholly lay myself in his power, and throw off entirely the guard of honest prudence; but will rather have my eye on what *possibly may be*, than what I think *probably will be*: And by this means I shall not only preserve *myself* but also my *friend*. Thus will a wise man reason, and thus, still keeping his charity, will he act.

FAB. 237. A LAME MAN AND A BLIND.

A BLIND man and a lame man, who were neighbours, had occaſions which called them to the ſame place, ſome miles diſtance from their habitations; and agreed to anſwer the common end, the blind man by finding legs and ſhoulders to carry the lame, who, having his ſight, could direct the other which way to go. By this means they comfortably ſupplied each other's defect, and ſafely got to their journey's end, and home again when their buſineſs was done.

MORAL.

Providence has ſo wiſely ordered matters in this life, that we may be ſerviceable to one another in almoſt every inſtance of it.

REFLECTION.

The whole race of mankind are but ſo many members of the ſame body; and in contributing to the eaſe and convenience of each other we are not only ſerviceable to the whole, but kind to ourſelves. Every man living has his imperfections and defects, like the blind and the lame in this fable; ſo that the helping of one another is as well an office of expedience as virtue. What one man wants, another ſupplies; and the mutual need we have of one another is the very band of human ſociety. Without theſe failings there would be neither friendſhip nor company; ſo that it is our intereſt to be both charitable and ſociable, when our very wants and neceſſities are converted by Providence into bleſſings.

FAB. 238. THE THREE PRETENTED PENITENTS.

A WOLF, a fox, and an aſs, had got once into a ſtrong fit of repentance for all the evils they had committed, and were reſolved to confeſs their ſins to one another.

I do confeſs, ſays the wolf, that once in hot blood I killed a goodly fat ſow: Indeed ſhe deſerved it; for the unnatural brute had twelve pigs, which ſhe left ſtarving in the ſty, while ſhe was ſtuffing her guts with acorns in a neighbouring wood: And when the dam was dead, it was the greateſt charity in the world, as I then thought, to put the poor pigs out of their pain; and upon

upon that conſideration only, I diſpatched them likewiſe. This, ſays the wolf, with tears in his eyes, I did, more's my grief. Comfort thy *tender* heart, honeſt Iſgrim, ſays the fox, for thou hadſt a good intention in puniſhing the ſow for leaving her young, and no leſs afterwards in putting an end to the miſery of the poor motherleſs pigs.

For my part, ſays the fox, I have been a wicked ſinner truly; for, among other depradations, I once ſeized upon a ſtately cock, as he was crowing among his miſtreſſes, and ſnapt his head off. Indeed he provoked me to it by his inſufferable inſolence and noiſineſs; for he was always ſtrutting, crowing, and making ſuch a diſturbance, that not one of his neighbours could ſleep for him. But what added to my fault, if a fault it was, the fooliſh hens made ſuch a cackling and ſcreaming, that, in my own defence, Jupiter forgive me! I was forced to ſerve them with the ſame ſauce. And then *he* likewiſe ſet up a howl of lamentation for his miſdeeds. Peace, peace, good Reynard, ſays the wolf, I don't ſee but you did juſtice upon the raſcally cock; and what you did by the hens, as you ſay, was in your own defence; and, for my part, I cannot ſee how an *honeſt* fox could do otherwiſe.

Thus the wolf and the fox, wolf and fox-like, acquitted each other. The aſs's confeſſion came next. I do confeſs, ſays he, that I nibbled a little ſtraw out of the ſaddle of my maſter, who was a groom, and the man got cold upon it: But I was ready to ſtarve for hunger: Pray deal mercifully by me. Doſt *thou* talk of mercy, cried the wolf? Why, it might have coſt the man his life, villain as thou art! Very true, ſays the fox, I never knew a more flagrant wickedneſs in my life!——— And ſo they both fell on, and tore the miſerable aſs in pieces.

MORAL.

When highwaymen and robbers ſit in judgment upon one another's wickedneſs, ſuch determination may be expected as the wolf and the fox pronounced upon each other's crimes; while the poor aſs, that fell into their clutches, with a thouſand times their innocence, was ſure to be made a victim to their predetermined malice and ſelfiſhneſs.

REFLEC-

REFLECTION.

The pretended unnaturalneſs of the ſow in leaving her young, though ſhe was in ſearch of food to increaſe her milk for their ſuſtenance; the wolf's deſtroying of the pigs afterwards, under pretence of putting them out of their pain; the fox's killing the cock for being troubleſome to the neighbours, and the hens afterwards under pretence of ſelf-defence; were wretched excuſes and palliations, that would acquit a wolf to a fox, and a fox to a wolf, only; but muſt aggravate the villainy and hypocriſy of the criminals to an all-ſeeing eye, whoſe penetration cannot be eluded by ſuch cobweb pretences. Upon the whole, this fable carries a ſevere reflection upon the generality of wretched mortals, who, even under the ſtrong ſenſe and conviction of their ſins, ſeek to palliate and extenuate them, as the wolf and fox did: The ſow, ſays the wolf, I deſtroyed; but it was in hot blood. So, ſays the ſinner, I have been guilty of ſuch and ſuch a ſenſual act; but it was in the heat of youth, when paſſion run ſtrong, and all mankind, more or leſs, are carried away by their appetites. And as the wolf and the fox could ſo eaſily acquit themſelves of the moſt heinous tranſgreſſions, and without mercy fall upon the aſs, and tear him in pieces, for a ſmall fault, which too was owing to hungry neceſſity; ſo many men paſs lightly over their own enormous crimes, and without compaſſion tear in pieces the reputation of a poor neighbour, not half ſo wicked as themſelves; or, in other caſes, proſecute neceſſitous wretches with unrelenting vengeance, for faults not near the ſize of their own. But let ſuch who will not *forgive*, as they hope to be *forgiven*, expect a dreadful retribution at the great day, when their partial pleas will not be able to hold before a righteous and unerring tribunal, and when they may expect, that the *meaſure they have meted to others, will be meted to them again.*

FAB. 239. DISAPPOINTED MILKMAID.

AS a country laſs was carrying a pail of milk to market upon her head, ſhe fell to caſting up, all the way, what a pretty account that ſtock of her's might come to in a ſhort time, with a little good management. This *milk*, ſays ſhe, will bring me ſo much ready money: That

That *money* will buy me so many eggs: Those *eggs* so much poultry; and, with the fox's leave, that *poultry* will make me mistress of a pig; which *pig* may be improved into a fat hog; and that *hog* will bring me so much money in my purse. Now with that *money*, I shall quickly strike into a *cow* and a *calf*: And then, says she, comes a *sweetheart!* Upon the transport of that thought, down comes the pail of milk; which put an end to the whole story of the eggs, the poultry, the pig, the hog, the cow, the calf, and all the whimsies that went along with it.

MORAL.

We should not, as the proverb says, reckon up our chickens before they are hatched; *that is, not build our happiness upon a foundation so slippery as remote contingencies.*

REFLECTION.

The milkmaid's case is too much that of all mankind; We go on from project to project, from hope to hope, as if we were to live for ever. One man forms to himself this scheme, another that; and Oh! how happy will each be when he brings his views to bear! But just as they think themselves within the reach of all they hoped and wished, comes death, another sort of sweeetheart than the poor girl pleased herself with; down comes all the frothy milk of their airy expectations, and they have nothing but the vanity of their hopes to contemplate upon, while they languish on a sick-bed; and at last wind up the whole melancholy story in the *memento* they afford to others, how they build their sole happiness on the transitory pleasures or amusements of this uncertain life.

FAB. 240. THERE'S NO TO-MORROW.

A MAN who had lived a very profligate life, at length being awakened by the lively representations of a sober friend on the apprehensions of a feverish indisposition, promised, That he would heartily set about his reformation, and that To-morrow he would seriously begin it. But the symptoms going off, and that To-morrow coming, he still put it off till the next, and so he went on from one To-morrow to another; but still he continued his reprobate life. This his friend observing to him, said, I am very much concerned to find how little effect my disinterested advice has upon you: But, my friend, let

let me tell you, that since your To-morrow never comes, nor do you seem to intend it shall, I will believe you no more, except you set about your repentance and amendment this very moment: For, to say nothing of your repeated broken promises, you must consider, that the time that is past is no more; that To-morrow is not OURS; and the present NOW is all we have to boast of.

MORAL.

That compunction of heart cannot be sincere, which takes not immediate effect, and can be put off till To-morrow. The friend's closing observation in the fable is so good a moral, that we need add nothing to it.

REFLECTION.

Whoever considers this emblem, will find it to be his own case; we promise, and we put off, and we sin, and we go on sinning: But still as our conscience checks us for it, we take up faint purposes, and half resolutions, to do so no more, and to lead a new life for the future. Thus, with the young fellow here, we indulge ourselves in our pleasures from time to time; and when we have trifled away our lives, day after day, from one to-morrow to another, that same to-morrow never comes. This is the sluggard's plea and practice; the libertine's, the miser's; and in short, whose is it not? Now, if we would but consider the vanity and the vexation of a lewd course of life; the impiety first of entering into vows, which we intend beforehand not to perform, and afterward of breaking them; the folly and the presumption of undertaking for any thing that is wholly out of our power; the necessity of improving every moment of our lives; the desperate and the irreparable hazard of losing opportunities; we should not venture body and soul upon the necessity of a procrastinated repentance, and postpone the most certain duties of a man, and of a Christian: For there is no To-morrow, nor any thing, in truth, but the present instant, that we can call our own.

FINIS.

Cornell